The KINGS TREASURIES
OF LITERATURE

GENERAL EDITOR
SIR A·T· QUILLER COUCH

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SELECTED ENGLISH ESSAYS

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SELECTED ENGLISH ESSAYS

I.—OF TRAVEL

TRAVEL, in the younger sort, is a part of education; in the elder, a part of experience. He that travelleth into a country before he hath some entrance into the language, goeth to school, and not to travel. That young men travel under some tutor, or grave servant, I allow well; so that he be such a one that hath the language and hath been in the country before; whereby he may be able to tell them what things are worthy to be seen in the country where they go; what acquaintances they are to seek; what exercises or discipline the place yieldeth. For else young men shall go hooded, and look abroad little. It is a strange thing that in sea-voyages, where there is nothing to be seen but sky and sea, men should make diaries, but in land-travel, wherein so much is to be observed, for the most part they omit it; as if chance were fitter to be registered than observation. Let diaries, therefore, be brought in use. The things to be seen and observed are: the courts of princes, specially when they give audience to ambassadors; the courts of justice, while they sit and hear causes, and so of

Allow. Approve. *Discipline.* Instruct[illegible]

consistories ecclesiastic; the churches and monasteries, with the monuments which are therein extant; the walls and fortifications of cities and towns, and so the havens and harbours; antiquities and ruins; libraries; colleges, disputations, and lectures, where any are; shipping and navies; houses and gardens of state and pleasure, near great cities; armories; arsenals; magazines; exchanges; burses; warehouses; exercises of horsemanship, fencing, training of soldiers, and the like; comedies, such whereunto the better sort of persons do resort; treasuries of jewels and robes; cabinets and rarities; and, to conclude, whatsoever is memorable in the places where they go. After all which the tutors or servants ought to make diligent enquiry. As for triumphs, masques, feasts, weddings, funerals, capital executions, and such shews, men need not to be put in mind of them; yet are they not to be neglected. If you will have a young man to put his travel into a little room, and in short time to gather much, this you must do. First, as was said, he must have some entrance into the language, before he goeth. Then he must have such a servant, or tutor, as knoweth the country, as was likewise said. Let him carry with him also some card or book describing the country where he travelleth; which will be a good key to his enquiry. Let him keep also a diary. Let him not stay long in one city or town; more or less as the place deserveth,

Consistories. Courts and boards.
Burses. Meeting-places of merchants.
Cabinets. Museums and picture-galleries.
Triumphs. Pageants. *Card.* Chart, map.

but not long: nay, when he stayeth in one city or town, let him change his lodging from one end and part of the town to another; which is a great adamant of acquaintance. Let him sequester himself from the company of his countrymen, and diet in such places where there is good company of the nation where he travelleth. Let him, upon his removes from one place to another, procure recommendation to some person of quality residing in the place whither he removeth; that he may use his favour in those things he desireth to see or know. Thus he may abridge his travel with much profit. As for the acquaintance which is to be sought in travel; that which is most of all profitable is acquaintance with the secretaries and employed men of ambassadors; for so in travelling in one country he shall suck the experience of many. Let him also see and visit eminent persons in all kinds, which are of great name abroad; that he may be able to tell how the life agreeth with the fame. For quarrels, they are with care and discretion to be avoided: they are commonly for mistresses, healths, place, and words. And let a man beware how he keepeth company with choleric and quarrelsome persons; for they will engage him into their own quarrels. When a traveller returneth

Adamant. Magnet. *Diet.* Board.
Employed men. Attachés. *Many.* I.e., many countries.
How the life agreeth with the fame. How far the man lives up to his reputation.
Healths. A man might be challenged to drink the health of some dubious cause or person.
Place. Precedence.

home, let him not leave the countries where he hath travelled altogether behind him, but maintain a correspondence by letters with those of his acquaintance which are of most worth. And let his travel appear rather in his discourse than in his apparel or gesture; and in his discourse, let him be rather advised in his answers than forward to tell stories; and let it appear that he doth not change his country manners for those of foreign parts, but only prick in some flowers of that he hath learned abroad into the customs of his own country.

FRANCIS BACON.

II.—OF WISDOM FOR A MAN'S SELF

AN ant is a wise creature for itself, but it is a shrewd thing in an orchard or garden. And certainly men that are great lovers of themselves waste the public. Divide with reason between self-love and society; and be so true to thyself, as thou be not false to others, especially to thy king and country. It is a poor centre of a man's actions, himself. It is right earth. For that only stands fast upon his own centre; whereas all things that have affinity with the heavens move upon the centre of another, which they benefit. The referring of all to a man's self is more tolerable in a sovereign prince; because themselves are not

Advised. Judicious, careful. *Prick.* Plant.
Shrewd. Mischievous.
Right. Justly called, or compared to.
All things . . . centre of another. I.e., sun, moon and stars move round the earth as centre.

only themselves, but their good and evil is at the peril of the public fortune. But it is a desperate evil in a servant to a prince, or a citizen in a republic. For whatsoever affairs pass such a man's hands, he crooketh them to his own ends; which must needs be often eccentric to the ends of his master or state. Therefore let princes, or states, choose such servants as have not this mark; except they mean their service should be made but the accessary. That which maketh the effect more pernicious is that all proportion is lost. It were disproportion enough for the servant's good to be preferred before the master's; but yet it is a greater extreme, when a little good of the servant shall carry things against a great good of the master's. And yet that is the case of bad officers, treasurers, ambassadors, generals, and other false and corrupt servants; which set a bias upon their bowl, of their own petty ends and envies, to the overthrow of their master's great and important affairs. And for the most part, the good such servants receive is after the model of their own fortune; but the hurt they sell for that good is after the model of their master's fortune. And certainly it is the nature of extreme self-lovers, as they will set a house on fire, and it were but to roast their eggs; and yet these men many times hold credit with their

Is at the peril of. Affects. *Crooketh.* Perverts.
Eccentric to. At variance with. *Accessary.* Subordinate.
Bias. A piece of lead inserted in one side of a bowl, which prevents it from rolling in a straight line.
Is after the model of their own fortune. I.e., is small.
As. That. *And.* For "an," meaning "if."

masters, because their study is but to please them and profit themselves; and for either respect they will abandon the good of their affairs.

Wisdom for a man's self is, in many branches thereof, a depraved thing. It is the wisdom of rats, that will be sure to leave a house somewhat before it fall. It is the wisdom of the fox, that thrusts out the badger, who digged and made room for him. It is the wisdom of crocodiles, that shed tears when they would devour. But that which is specially to be noted is, that those which (as Cicero says of Pompey) are *sui amantes sine rivali*, are many times unfortunate. And whereas they have all their time sacrificed to themselves, they become in the end themselves sacrifices to the inconstancy of fortune, whose wings they thought by their self-wisdom to have pinioned.

FRANCIS BACON.

III.—OF AMBITION

AMBITION is like choler; which is an humour that maketh men active, earnest, full of alacrity, and stirring, if it be not stopped. But if it be stopped, and cannot have his way, it becometh adust, and

Respect. Consideration, object.
Sui amantes sine rivali. Lovers of themselves, without a rival; *i.e.*, they are very fond of themselves, but no one else is.
Pinioned. Clipt, to prevent her from flying away.
Choler. It was believed that each man's character depended on a certain intermixture of four bodily juices or humours, of which choler was one.
Adust. Dried up with heat.

thereby malign and venomous. So ambitious men, if they find the way open for their rising, and still get forward, they are rather busy than dangerous; but if they be checked in their desires, they become secretly discontent, and look upon men and matters with an evil eye, and are best pleased when things go backward; which is the worst property in a servant of a prince or state. Therefore it is good for princes, if they use ambitious men, to handle it so as they be still progressive and not retrograde: which because it cannot be without inconvenience, it is good not to use such natures at all. For if they rise not with their service, they will take order to make their service fall with them. But since we have said it were good not to use men of ambitious natures, except it be upon necessity, it is fit we speak in what cases they are of necessity. Good commanders in the wars must be taken, be they never so ambitious: for the use of their service dispenseth with the rest; and to take a soldier without ambition is to pull off his spurs. There is also great use of ambitious men in being screens to princes in matters of danger and envy: for no man will take that part, except he be like a seeled dove, that mounts and mounts because he cannot see about him. There is use also of ambitious men in pulling down the greatness of any subject that over-tops: as Tiberius used Macro in the pulling down of

Still. Continually, always. *Busy.* Restless, meddlesome.
Property. Quality. *As.* That.
Order. Measures. *Dispenseth with.* Excu[illegible]
Seeled. With its eyelids sewn together.

Sejanus. Since therefore they must be used in such cases, there resteth to speak how they must be bridled, that they may be less dangerous. There is less danger of them if they be of mean birth, than if they be noble; and if they be rather harsh of nature, than gracious and popular; and if they be rather new raised, than grown cunning and fortified in their greatness. It is counted by some a weakness in princes to have favourites; but it is of all others the best remedy against ambitious great-ones. For when the way of pleasuring and displeasuring lieth by the favourite, it is impossible any other should be over-great. Another means to curb them, is to balance them by others as proud as they. But then there must be some middle counsellors, to keep things steady; for without that ballast the ship will roll too much. At the least, a prince may animate and inure some meaner persons to be, as it were, scourges to ambitious men. As for the having of them obnoxious to ruin, if they be of fearful natures, it may do well; but if they be stout and daring, it may precipitate their designs, and prove dangerous. As for the pulling of them down, if the affairs require it, and that it may be done with safety suddenly, the only way is the interchange continually of favours

Sejanus. The too powerful favourite of the Emperor Tiberius.

There resteth. It remains.

Cunning. Skilled, experienced.

When the way . . . favourite. When the favourite is the only dispenser of the king's favours or rebuffs.

Animate. Encourage. *Inure.* Accustom.

Obnoxious. Liable. *Fearful.* Timid.

IV.—OF STUDIES

Studies serve for delight, for ornament, and for ability. Their chief use for delight is in privateness and retiring; for ornament, is in discourse; and for ability, is in the judgement and disposition of business. For expert men can execute, and perhaps judge of particulars, one by one; but the general counsels, and the plots and marshalling of affairs, come best from those that are learned. To spend too much time in studies is sloth; to use them too much for ornament is affectation; to make judgement wholly by their rules is the humour of the scholar. They perfect nature, and are perfected by experience; for natural abilities are like natural plants, that need pruning by study; and studies themselves do give forth directions too much at large, except they be bounded in by experience. Crafty men contemn studies; simple men admire them; and wise men use them: for they teach not their own use; but that is a wisdom without them and above them, won by observation. Read not to contradict and confute; nor to believe and take for granted; nor to find talk and discourse; but to weigh and consider. Some books are to be tasted,

Ability. Mental power.
Expert. Experienced; almost "practical."
Plots. Planning. *Humour.* Special characteristic.
Studies themselves . . . experience. I.e., the general notions got from books must be corrected by particular facts got by experience.
Crafty. Clever. *Without.* Outside.

others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested: that is, some books are to be read only in parts; others to be read, but not curiously; and some few to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention. Some books also may be read by deputy, and extracts made of them by others; but that would be only in the less important arguments, and the meaner sort of books; else distilled books are like common distilled waters, flashy things. Reading maketh a full man; conference a ready man; and writing an exact man. And therefore, if a man write little, he had need have a great memory; if he confer little, he had need have a present wit; and if he read little, he had need have much cunning, to seem to know that he doth not. Histories make men wise; poets witty; the mathematics subtile; natural philosophy deep; moral grave; logic and rhetoric able to contend. *Abeunt studia in mores.* Nay, there is no stond or impediment in the wit, but may be wrought out by fit studies: like as diseases of the body may have appropriate exercises. Bowling is good for the stone and reins; shooting for the lungs and breast; gentle walking for the stomach; riding for the head; and the like. So if a man's wit

Curiously. Very carefully. *Arguments.* Subjects.
Flashy. Tasteless, insipid. *Conference.* Conversation.
A present wit. A ready mind.
That. What. *Witty.* Imaginative.
Philosophy. What we call "science."
Moral. I.e., moral philosophy. *Contend.* Argue.
Abeunt studia in mores. Character is influenced by study (Ovid).
Stond. Obstacle. *Reins.* Kidneys. *Wit.* Mind.

be wandering, let him study the mathematics; for in demonstrations, if his wit be called away never so little, he must begin again: if his wit be not apt to distinguish or find differences, let him study the schoolmen; for they are *cymini sectores*: if he be not apt to beat over matters, and to call one thing to prove and illustrate another, let him study the lawyers' cases: so every defect of the mind may have a special receipt.

FRANCIS BACON.

V.—OF MYSELF

It is a hard and nice subject for a man to write of himself; it grates his own heart to say anything of disparagement, and the reader's ears to hear anything of praise from him. There is no danger from me of offending him in this kind; neither my mind, nor my body, nor my fortune, allow me any materials for that vanity. It is sufficient, for my own contentment, that they have preserved me from being scandalous, or remarkable on the defective side. But besides that, I shall here speak of myself only

Schoolmen. The philosophers of the Middle Ages.
Cymini sectores. We would say "hair-splitters."
Beat over. Examine thoroughly.
Lawyers' cases. Previous judgments in similar cases, which serve as arguments in the case at issue. See p. 80.
Receipt. Prescription, medicine.
Nice. Delicate. *Kind.* Way.
Scandalous. Liable to reproach.

in relation to the subject of these precedent discourses, and shall be likelier thereby to fall into the contempt, than rise up to the estimation of most people. As far as my memory can return back into my past life, before I knew or was capable of guessing what the world, or glories, or business of it were, the natural affections of my soul gave a secret bent of aversion from them, as some plants are said to turn away from others, by an antipathy imperceptible to themselves, and inscrutable to man's understanding. Even when I was a very young boy at school, instead of running about on holidays, and playing with my fellows, I was wont to steal from them, and walk into the fields, either alone with a book, or with some one companion, if I could find any of the same temper. I was then, too, so much an enemy to constraint, that my masters could never prevail on me, by any persuasions or encouragements, to learn, without book, the common rules of grammar, in which they dispensed with me alone, because they found I made a shift to do the usual exercise out of my own reading and observation. That I was then of the same mind as I am now—which, I confess, I wonder at myself—may appear at the latter end of an ode which I made when I was but thirteen years old, and which was then printed, with many other verses. The beginning of it is boyish; but of this part which I here set

Precedent discourses. I.e., his preceding essays.
Dispensed with me alone. I.e., they relaxed the usual discipline in my case only.

down, if a very little were corrected, I should hardly now be much ashamed.

This only grant me, that my means may lie
Too low for envy, for contempt too high.
Some honour I would have,
Not from great deeds, but good alone;
Th' unknown are better than ill-known.
Rumour can ope the grave;
Acquaintance I would have; but when 't depends
Not on the number, but the choice of friends.

Books should, not business, entertain the light,
And sleep, as undisturbed as death, the night.
My house a cottage, more
Than palace, and should fitting be
For all my use, no luxury.
My garden painted o'er
With Nature's hand, not Art's; and pleasures yield,
Horace might envy in his Sabine field.

Thus would I double my life's fading space,
For he that runs it well, twice runs his race.
And in this true delight,
These unbought sports, this happy state,
I would not fear nor wish my fate,
But boldly say each night,
To-morrow let my sun his beams display,
Or in clouds hide them; I have lived to-day.

You may see by it I was even then acquainted with the poets, for the conclusion is taken out of Horace; and perhaps it was the immature and immoderate love of them which stamped first, or rather engraved, these characters in me. They were like letters cut

Means. Fortune.

Rumour can ope the grave. I.e., fame can make a man live after death.

Fate. Death. *Horace. Odes*, III. 29, 41.

into the bark of a young tree, which, with the tree, still grow proportionably. But how this love came to be produced in me so early, is a hard question: I believe I can tell the particular little chance that filled my head first with such chimes of verse, as have never since left ringing there: for I remember when I began to read, and to take some pleasure in it, there was wont to lie in my mother's parlour—I know not by what accident, for she herself never in her life read any book but of devotion—but there was wont to lie Spenser's works; this I happened to fall upon, and was infinitely delighted with the stories of the knights, and giants, and monsters, and brave houses, which I found everywhere there —though my understanding had little to do with all this—and by degrees, with the tinkling of the rhyme, and dance of the numbers; so that I think I had read him all over before I was twelve years old. With these affections of mind, and my heart wholly set upon letters, I went to the university; but was soon torn from thence by that public violent storm, which would suffer nothing to stand where it did, but rooted up every plant, even from the princely cedars, to me, the hyssop. Yet I had as good fortune as could have befallen me in such a tempest; for I was cast by it into the family of one of the best persons,

Still. Always. *Brave.* Fine. *Numbers.* Rhythm.

Public violent storm. The war between Charles I. and Parliament.

Hyssop. A low-growing shrub. The phrase is from I. Kings iv. 33.

One of the best persons. Henry Jermyn, Lord St Albans.

and into the court of one of the best princesses of the world. Now, though I was here engaged in ways most contrary to the original design of my life; that is, into much company, and no small business, and into a daily sight of greatness, both militant and triumphant—for that was the state then of the English and French courts—yet all this was so far from altering my opinion, that it only added the confirmation of reason to that which was before but natural inclination. I saw plainly all the paint of that kind of life, the nearer I came to it; and that beauty which I did not fall in love with, when, for aught I knew, it was real, was not like to bewitch or entice me when I saw it was adulterate. I met with several great persons, whom I liked very well, but could not perceive that any part of their greatness was to be liked or desired, no more than I would be glad or content to be in a storm, though I saw many ships which rid safely and bravely in it. A storm would not agree with my stomach, if it did with my courage; though I was in a crowd of as good company as could be found anywhere, though I was in business of great and honourable trust, though I ate at the best table, and enjoyed the best conveniences for present subsistence that ought to be desired by a man of my condition, in banishment and public distresses; yet I could not abstain from

One of the best princesses. Henrietta Maria, wife of Charles I.
That was the state . . . courts. I.e., England was still at war; France had recently annexed Alsace and Artois, as the result of victories in the Thirty Years' War.
Adulterate. False, counterfeit.

Non ego perfidum dixi sacramentum. Nothing shall separate me from a mistress which I have loved so long, and have now at last married; though she neither has brought me a rich portion, nor lived yet so quietly with me as I hoped from her.

Nec vos dulcissima mundi
Nomina, vos musæ, libertas, otia, libri,
Hortique, sylvæque, animâ remanente relinquam.

Nor by me e'er shall you,
You of all names, the sweetest and the best,
You muses, books, and liberty, and rest;
You gardens, fields, and woods forsaken be,
As long as life itself forsakes not me.

ABRAHAM COWLEY.

VI.—A VISIT TO A FRIEND

THERE are several persons who have many pleasures and entertainments in their possession which they do not enjoy. It is therefore a kind and good office to acquaint them with their own happiness, and turn their attention to such instances of their good fortune which they are apt to overlook. Persons in the married state often want such a monitor, and pine away their days, by looking upon the same condition in anguish and murmur, which carries with it in the opinion of others a complication of all the pleasures of life, and a retreat from its inquietudes.

I am led into this thought by a visit I made an

Non ego perfidum dixi sacramentum. I have sworn no false oath.—Horace, *Odes,* II. 17, 10.

Mistress. I.e., the study and practice of literature.

in a day to refresh your countenance and dress, when Teraminta reigned in your heart. As we came up in the coach, I repeated to my wife some of your verses on her." With such reflections on little passages which happened long ago, we passed our time during a cheerful and elegant meal. After dinner, his lady left the room, as did also the children. As soon as we were alone, he took me by the hand: "Well, my good friend," says he, "I am heartily glad to see thee; I was afraid you would never have seen all the company that dined with you to-day again. Do you not think the good woman of the house a little altered, since you followed her from the play-house, to find out who she was for me?" I perceived a tear fall down his cheek as he spoke, which moved me not a little. But to turn the discourse, said I: "She is not, indeed, quite that creature she was when she returned me the letter I carried from you; and told me she hoped, as I was a gentleman, I would be employed no more to trouble her, who had never offended me; but would be so much the gentleman's friend as to dissuade him from a pursuit which he could never succeed in. You may remember, I thought her in earnest, and you were forced to employ your cousin Will, who made his sister get acquainted with her for you. You cannot expect her to be for ever fifteen."—"Fifteen!" replied my good friend. "Ah! you little understand, you that have lived a bachelor, how great, how exquisite a pleasure there is in being really beloved! It is impossible that the most beauteous face in nature should

always to be seen in children in other families. I speak freely to you, my old friend; ever since her sickness, things that gave me the quickest joy before, turn now to a certain anxiety. As the children play in the next room, I know the poor things by their steps, and am considering what they must do, should they lose their mother in their tender years. The pleasure I used to take in telling my boy stories of the battles, and asking my girl questions about the disposal of her baby, and the gossiping of it, is turned into inward reflection and melancholy."

He would have gone on in this tender way, when the good lady entered, and with an inexpressible sweetness in her countenance told us, she had been searching her closet for something very good, to treat such an old friend as I was. Her husband's eyes sparkled with pleasure at the cheerfulness of her countenance; and I saw all his fears vanish in an instant. The lady observing something in our looks which showed we had been more serious than ordinary, and seeing her husband receive her with great concern under a forced cheerfulness, immediately guessed at what we had been talking of; and applying herself to me, said with a smile: "Mr. Bickerstaff, do not believe a word of what he tells you; I shall still live to have you for my second, as I have often promised you, unless he takes more care of himself than he has done since his coming

Quickest. Liveliest. *Baby.* Doll.
Gossiping. Christening; from first meaning of "gossip," a god-parent.

mirth, that the child had excellent parts, and was a great master of all the learning on the other side eight years old. I perceived him a very great historian in Æsop's *Fables*; but he frankly declared to me his mind, that he did not delight in that learning, because he did not believe they were true; for which reason I found he had very much turned his studies for about a twelvemonth past, into the lives and adventures of Don Belianis of Greece, Guy of Warwick, the Seven Champions, and other historians of that age. I could not but observe the satisfaction the father took in the forwardness of his son; and that these diversions might turn to some profit, I found the boy had made remarks, which might be of service to him during the course of his whole life. He would tell you the mismanagements of John Hickathrift, find fault with the passionate temper in Bevis of Southampton, and love St. George for being the champion of England; and by this means had his thoughts insensibly moulded into the notions of discretion, virtue, and honour. I was extolling his accomplishments, when the mother told me, that the little girl who led me in this morning, was in her way a better scholar than he: "Betty," says she, "deals chiefly in fairies and sprights; and sometimes in a winter night will terrify the maids

Parts. Abilities.

Don Belianis of Greece. One of Don Quixote's masters in chivalry.

Guy of Warwick. A hero of Early English romance.

John Hickathrift. A Hercules of the time of the Norman Conquest.

with her accounts, till they are afraid to go to bed."

I sat with them till it was very late, sometimes in merry, sometimes in serious discourse, with this particular pleasure, which gives the only relish to all conversation, a sense that every one of us liked each other. I went home, considering the different conditions of a married life and that of a bachelor; and I must confess it struck me with a secret concern, to reflect, that whenever I go off, I shall leave no traces behind me. In this pensive mood I returned to my family; that is to say, to my maid, my dog, and my cat, who only can be the better or worse for what happens to me.

RICHARD STEELE (*The Tatler*, No. 95).

VII.—THE CLUB

THE first of our society is a gentleman of Worcestershire, of ancient descent, a baronet, his name Sir Roger de Coverley. His great-grandfather was inventor of that famous country-dance which is called after him. All who know that shire are very well acquainted with the parts and merits of Sir Roger. He is a gentleman that is very singular in his behaviour, but his singularities proceed from his good sense, and are contradictions to the manners of the world, only as he thinks the world is in the

As. As far as.

wrong. However, this humour creates him no enemies, for he does nothing with sourness or obstinacy; and his being unconfined to modes and forms, makes him but the readier and more capable to please and oblige all who know him. When he is in town he lives in Soho Square. It is said, he keeps himself a bachelor by reason he was crossed in love, by a perverse beautiful widow of the next county to him. Before this disappointment, Sir Roger was what you call a fine gentleman, had often supped with my Lord Rochester and Sir George Etherege, fought a duel upon his first coming to town, and kicked Bully Dawson in a public coffee-house for calling him youngster. But being ill used by the above-mentioned widow, he was very serious for a year and a half; and though, his temper being naturally jovial, he at last got over it, he grew careless of himself, and never dressed afterwards; he continues to wear a coat and doublet of the same cut that were in fashion at the time of his repulse, which, in his merry humours, he tells us, has been in and out twelve times since he first wore it. He is now in his fifty-sixth year, cheerful, gay, and hearty; keeps a good house both in town and country; a great lover of mankind; but there is such a mirthful cast in his behaviour, that he is rather beloved than

Humour. Peculiarity.

Lord Rochester and Sir George Etherege. Wits and men of fashion of Charles II.'s day.

Bully Dawson. A notorious ruffian of Whitefriars.

Dressed. *I.e.*, fashionably. *Humours*. Moods.

In and out. In and out of fashion.

selves, when he should be inquiring into the debates among men which arise from them. He knows the argument of each of the orations of Demosthenes and Tully; but not one case in the reports of our own courts. No one ever took him for a fool, but none, except his intimate friends, know he has a great deal of wit. This turn makes him at once both disinterested and agreeable: as few of his thoughts are drawn from business, they are most of them fit for conversation. His taste of books is a little too just for the age he lives in; he has read all, but approves of very few. His familiarity with the customs, manners, actions, and writings of the ancients, makes him a very delicate observer of what occurs to him in the present world. He is an excellent critic, and the time of the play is his hour of business; exactly at five he passes through New Inn, crosses through Russel Court, and takes a turn at Will's till the play begins; he has his shoes rubbed and his periwig powdered at the barber's as you go into the Rose. It is for the good of the audience when he is at a play, for the actors have an ambition to please him.

The person of next consideration is Sir Andrew Freeport, a merchant of great eminence in the city of London; a person of indefatigable industry,

Demosthenes and Tully. The great Greek and Roman orators; Tully is now known as Cicero.

Business. We might say "shop."

Just. Correct, fastidious.

Will's. The famous coffee-house, or club, where Dryden used to hold his literary court.

strong reason, and great experience. His notions of trade are noble and generous, and (as every rich man has usually some sly way of jesting, which would make no great figure were he not a rich man) he calls the sea the British Common. He is acquainted with commerce in all its parts, and will tell you that it is a stupid and barbarous way to extend dominion by arms; for true power is to be got by arts and industry. He will often argue, that if this part of our trade were well cultivated, we should gain from one nation; and if another, from another. I have heard him prove, that diligence makes more lasting acquisitions than valour, and that sloth has ruined more nations than the sword. He abounds in several frugal maxims, among which the greatest favourite is, "A penny saved is a penny got." A general trader of good sense, is pleasanter company than a general scholar; and Sir Andrew having a natural unaffected eloquence, the perspicuity of his discourse gives the same pleasure that wit would in another man. He has made his fortunes himself; and says that England may be richer than other kingdoms, by as plain methods, as he himself is richer than other men; though at the same time I can say this of him, that there is not a point in the compass but blows home a ship in which he is an owner.

Next to Sir Andrew in the club-room sits Captain

Arts and industry. "Peaceful penetration" is the modern phrase.

Point in the compass. I.e., a wind blowing from that point.

Sentry, a gentleman of great courage, good understanding, but invincible modesty. He is one of those that deserve very well, but are very awkward at putting their talents within the observation of such as should take notice of them. He was some years a captain, and behaved himself with great gallantry in several engagements, and at several sieges; but having a small estate of his own, and being next heir to Sir Roger, he has quitted a way of life in which no man can rise suitably to his merit, who is not something of a courtier as well as a soldier. I have heard him often lament, that in a profession where merit is placed in so conspicuous a view, impudence should get the better of modesty. When he has talked to this purpose I never heard him make a sour expression, but frankly confess that he left the world, because he was not fit for it. A strict honesty and an even regular behaviour, are in themselves obstacles to him that must press through crowds, who endeavour at the same end with himself, the favour of a commander. He will however in his way of talk excuse generals, for not disposing according to men's desert, or inquiring into it: "For," says he, "that great man who has a mind to help me, has as many to break through to come at me, as I have to come to him"; therefore he will conclude, that the man who would make a figure, especially in a military way, must get over all false modesty, and assist his patron against the importunity of other pretenders, by a proper assurance in his own

Disposing. Making appointments, promoting.

vindication. He says it is a civil cowardice to be backward in asserting what you ought to expect, as it is a military fear to be slow in attacking when it is your duty. With this candour does the gentleman speak of himself and others. The same frankness runs through all his conversation. The military part of his life has furnished him with many adventures, in the relation of which he is very agreeable to the company; for he is never overbearing, though accustomed to command men in the utmost degree below him; nor ever too obsequious, from an habit of obeying men highly above him.

But that our society may not appear a set of humourists unacquainted with the gallantries and pleasures of the age, we have among us the gallant Will Honeycomb, a gentleman who according to his years should be in the decline of his life, but having ever been very careful of his person, and always had a very easy fortune, time has made but very little impression, either by wrinkles on his forehead, or traces in his brain. His person is well turned, of a good height. He is very ready at that sort of discourse with which men usually entertain women. He has all his life dressed very well, and remembers habits as others do men. He can smile when one speaks to him, and laughs easily. He knows the history of every mode, and can inform you from which of the French King's wenches our wives and daughters had this manner of curling their hair, that way of placing their hoods; and

Humourists. Oddities. *Habits*. Clothes.

whose vanity to show her foot made petticoats so short in such a year. In a word, all his conversation and knowledge has been in the female world. As other men of his age will take notice to you what such a minister said upon such and such an occasion, he will tell you when the Duke of Monmouth danced at court such a woman was then smitten, another was taken with him at the head of his troop in the Park. In all these important relations, he has ever about the same time received a glance or a blow of a fan from some celebrated beauty, mother of the present Lord Such-a-one. This way of talking of his very much enlivens the conversation among us of a more sedate turn; and I find there is not one of the company but myself, who rarely speak at all, but speaks of him as that sort of man, who is usually called a well-bred fine gentleman.

I cannot tell whether I am to account him whom I am next to speak of, as one of our company; for he visits us but seldom, but when he does it adds to every man else a new enjoyment of himself. He is a clergyman, a very philosophic man, of general learning, great sanctity of life, and the most exact good breeding. He has the misfortune to be of a very weak constitution, and consequently cannot accept of such cares and business as preferments in his function would oblige him to: he is therefore

Duke of Monmouth. The handsome son of Charles II. who raised an insurrection against James II., and was defeated at Sedgemoor.

Relations. Narratives.

Preferments in his function. Higher posts in his profession.

interests, that nothing may be written or published to the prejudice or infringement of their just rights and privileges.

I last night sat very late in company with this select body of friends, who entertained me with several remarks which they and others had made upon these my speculations, as also with the various success which they had met with among their several ranks and degrees of readers. Will Honeycomb told me, in the softest manner he could, that there were some ladies (" But for your comfort," says Will, " they are not those of the most wit ") that were offended at the liberties I had taken with the Opera and the Puppet-Show: that some of them were likewise very much surprised, that I should think such serious points as the dress and equipage of persons of quality proper subjects for raillery.

He was going on, when Sir Andrew Freeport took him up short, and told him, that the papers he hinted at had done great good in the city, and that all their wives and daughters were the better for them: and further added, that the whole city thought themselves very much obliged to me for declaring my generous intentions to scourge vice and folly as they appear in a multitude, without condescending to be a publisher of particular intrigues and cuckoldoms. " In short," says Sir Andrew, " if

Speculations. Used in a special sense, for the essays of *The Spectator.*

Opera and the Puppet-Show. The Spectator, Nos. 5, 14, 18, 29, 31.

Cuckoldoms. Conjugal infidelities.

Captain Sentry spoke very sparingly on this occasion. What he said was only to commend my prudence in not touching upon the Army, and advised me to continue to act discreetly in that point.

By this time I found every subject of my speculations was taken away from me, by one or other of the club; and began to think myself in the condition of the good man that had one wife who took a dislike to his grey hairs, and another to his black, till by their picking out what each of them had an aversion to, they left his head altogether bald and naked.

While I was thus musing with myself, my worthy friend the clergyman, who, very luckily for me, was at the club that night, undertood my cause. He told us, that he wondered any order of persons should think themselves too considerable to be advised: that it was not quality, but innocence, which exempted men from reproof: that vice and folly ought to be attacked wherever they could be met with, and especially when they were placed in high and conspicuous stations of life. He further added, that my paper would only serve to aggravate the pains of poverty, if it chiefly exposed those who are already depressed, and in some measure turned into ridicule, by the meanness of their conditions and circumstances. He afterwards proceeded to take notice of the great use this paper might be of to the public, by reprehending those vices which are too trivial for the chastisement of the law, and too fan-

tastical for the cognizance of the pulpit. He then advised me to prosecute my undertaking with cheerfulness; and assured me, that whoever might be displeased with me, I should be approved by all those whose praises do honour to the persons on whom they are bestowed.

The whole club pay a particular deference to the discourse of this gentleman, and are drawn into what he says, as much by the candid ingenuous manner with which he delivers himself, as by the strength of argument and force of reason which he makes use of. Will Honeycomb immediately agreed, that what he had said was right; and that for his part, he would not insist upon the quarter which he had demanded for the ladies. Sir Andrew gave up the city with the same frankness. The Templar would not stand out; and was followed by Sir Roger and the Captain: who all agreed that I should be at ...ty to carry the war into what quarter I pleased; ...ided I continued to combat with criminals in a ...y, and to assault the vice without hurting the ...son.

...his debate, which was held for the good of ...nkind, put me in mind of that which the Roman ...umvirate were formerly engaged in, for their ...truction. Every man at first stood hard for his

...*genuous*. Straightforward.
...*arter*. Exemption from satire.
...*iumvirate*. A group of three leading men who seized the power in the decline of the Roman Republic; the first group consisted of Cæsar, Pompey and Lepidus.
...*ood hard for*. Defended warmly.

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friend, till they found that by this means they should spoil their proscription: and at length, making a sacrifice of all their acquaintance and relations, furnished out a very decent execution.

Having thus taken my resolutions to march on boldly in the cause of virtue and good sense, and to annoy their adversaries in whatever degree or rank of men they may be found, I shall be deaf for the future to all the remonstrances that shall be made to me on this account. If Punch grows extravagant, I shall reprimand him very freely: if the stage becomes a nursery of folly and impertinence, I shall not be afraid to animadvert upon it. In short, if I meet with anything in city, court, or country, that shocks modesty or good manners, I shall use my utmost endeavours to make an example of it. I must however entreat every particular person, who does me the honour to be a reader of this paper, never to think himself, or any one of his friends or enemies, aimed at in what is said: for I promise him, never to draw a faulty character which does not fit at least a thousand people; or to publish a single paper, that is not written in the spirit of benevolence, and with a love to mankind.

ADDISON (*The Spectator*, No. 34).

Proscription. They published lists of their enemies, who might then be killed with impunity by anyone.
Punch. The well-known puppet-play.

IX.—SIR ROGER AT HOME

HAVING often received an invitation from my friend Sir Roger de Coverley to pass away a month with him in the country, I last week accompanied him thither, and am settled with him for some time at his country house, where I intend to form several of my ensuing speculations. Sir Roger, who is very well acquainted with my humour, lets me rise and go to bed when I please, dine at his own table or in my chamber as I think fit, sit still and say nothing without bidding me be merry. When the gentlemen of the country come to see him, he only shews me at a distance. As I have been walking in his fields I have observed them stealing a sight of me over an hedge, and have heard the knight desiring them not to let me see them, for that I hated to be stared at.

I am the more at ease in Sir Roger's family, because it consists of sober and staid persons; for as the knight is the best master in the world, he seldom changes his servants; and as he is beloved by all about him, his servants never care for leaving him: by this means his domestics are all in years, and grown old with their master. You would take his *valet de chambre* for his brother, his butler is grey-headed, his groom is one of the gravest men that I have ever seen, and his coachman has the looks of a Privy Counsellor. You see the goodness of the master even in the old house-dog, and in a gray pad

Speculations. See p. 40. *Humour.* Disposition.
Pad. An easy-paced road-horse.

that is kept in the stable with great care and tenderness out of regard to his past services, though he has been useless for several years.

I could not but observe with a great deal of pleasure the joy that appeared in the countenances of these ancient domestics upon my friend's arrival at his country seat. Some of them could not refrain from tears at the sight of their old master; every one of them pressed forward to do something for him, and seemed discouraged if they were not employed. At the same time the good old knight, with a mixture of the father and the master of the family, tempered the enquiries after his own affairs with several kind questions relating to themselves. This humanity and good nature engages every body to him, so that when he is pleasant upon any of them, all his family are in good humour, and none so much as the person whom he diverts himself with: on the contrary, if he coughs, or betrays any infirmity of old age, it is easy for a stander-by to observe a secret concern in the looks of all his servants.

My worthy friend has put me under the particular care of his butler, who is a very prudent man, and, as well as the rest of his fellow-servants, wonderfully desirous of pleasing me, because they have often heard their master talk of me as of his particular friend.

My chief companion, when Sir Roger is diverting himself in the woods or the fields, is a very venerable man who is ever with Sir Roger, and has lived at his

Is pleasant upon any of them. Jokes at their expense.

house in the nature of a chaplain above thirty years. This gentleman is a person of good sense and some learning, of a very regular life and obliging conversation: he heartily loves Sir Roger, and knows that he is very much in the old knight's esteem; so that he lives in the family rather as a relation than a dependent.

I have observed in several of my papers that my friend Sir Roger, amidst all his good qualities, is something of an humourist; and that his virtues, as well as imperfections, are as it were tinged by a certain extravagance, which makes them particularly his, and distinguishes them from those of other men. This cast of mind, as it is generally very innocent in itself, so it renders his conversation highly agreeable, and more delightful than the same degree of sense and virtue would appear in their common and ordinary colours. As I was walking with him last night, he asked me how I liked the good man whom I have just now mentioned? and without staying for my answer, told me, that he was afraid of being insulted with Latin and Greek at his own table; for which reason, he desired a particular friend of his at the university to find him out a clergyman rather of plain sense than much learning, of a good aspect, a clear voice, a sociable temper, and, if possible, a man that understood a little of backgammon. "My friend," says Sir Roger, "found me out this gentleman, who, besides the endowments required of him, is, they tell me, a good scholar,

Humourist. Oddity.

though he does not show it. I have given him the parsonage of the parish; and because I know his value, have settled upon him a good annuity for life. If he outlives me, he shall find that he was higher in my esteem than perhaps he thinks he is. He has now been with me thirty years; and though he does not know I have taken notice of it, has never in all that time asked anything of me for himself, though he is every day soliciting me for something in behalf of one or other of my tenants his parishioners. There has not been a law-suit in the parish since he has lived among them: if any dispute arises,

afternoon. He then showed us his list of preachers for the whole year, where I saw with a great deal of pleasure Archbishop Tillotson, Bishop Saunderson, Doctor Barrow, Doctor Calamy, with several living authors who have published discourses of practical divinity. I no sooner saw this venerable man in the pulpit, but I very much approved of my friend's insisting upon the qualifications of a good aspect and a clear voice; for I was so charmed with the gracefulness of his figure and delivery, as well as with the discourses he pronounced, that I think I never passed any time more to my satisfaction. A sermon repeated after this manner, is like the composition of a poet in the mouth of a graceful actor.

I could heartily wish that more of our country clergy would follow this example; and instead of wasting their spirits in laborious compositions of their own, would endeavour after a handsome elocution, and all those other talents that are proper to enforce what has been penned by greater masters. This would not only be more easy to themselves, but more edifying to the people.

ADDISON (*The Spectator*, No. 106).

X.—WILL WIMBLE

As I was yesterday morning walking with Sir Roger before his house, a country-fellow brought him a huge fish, which, he told him, Mr. William Wimble had caught that very morning; and that he presented

Handsome. Appropriate.

it, with his service, to him, and intended to come and dine with him. At the same time he delivered a letter, which my friend read to me as soon as the messenger left him.

SIR ROGER,

I desire you to accept of a jack, which is the best I have caught this season. I intend to come and stay with you a week, and see how the perch bite in the Black River. I observed, with some concern, the last time I saw you upon the bowling-green, that your whip wanted a lash to it: I will bring half a dozen with me that I twisted last week, which I hope will serve you all the time you are in the country. I have not been out of the saddle for six days last past, having been at Eton with Sir John's eldest son. He takes to his learning hugely.

I am,
Sir,
Your humble servant,
WILL WIMBLE.

This extraordinary letter, and message that accompanied it, made me very curious to know the character and quality of the gentleman who sent them; which I found to be as follows: Will Wimble is younger brother to a baronet, and descended of the ancient family of the Wimbles. He is now between forty and fifty: but being bred to no business and born to no estate, he generally lives with his elder brother as superintendent of his game. He hunts a pack of dogs better than any man in the country, and is very famous for finding out a hare. He is extremely well versed in all the little handicrafts of an idle man: he makes a May-fly to a miracle; and furnishes

Jack: Pike.

carry a set of shuttlecocks he had with him in a little box to a lady that lived about a mile off, to whom it seems he had promised such a present for above this half-year. Sir Roger's back was no sooner turned, but honest Will began to tell me of a large cock pheasant that he had sprung in one of the neighbouring woods, with two or three other adventures of the same nature. Odd and uncommon characters are the game that I look for, and most delight in; for which reason I was as much pleased with the novelty of the person that talked to me, as he could be for his life with the springing of a pheasant, and therefore listened to him with more than ordinary attention.

In the midst of his discourse the bell rung to dinner, where the gentleman I have been speaking of had the pleasure of seeing the huge jack, he had caught, served up for the first dish in a most sumptuous manner. Upon our sitting down to it he gave us a long account how he had hooked it, played with it, foiled it, and at length drew it out upon the bank, with several other particulars that lasted all the first course. A dish of wild-fowl that came afterwards furnished conversation for the rest of the dinner, which concluded with a late invention of Will's for improving the quail-pipe.

Upon withdrawing into my room after dinner, I was secretly touched with compassion towards the

Sprung Put up, made rise.

Game. *I.e.*, not pheasants, etc.

Quail-pipe. Used to imitate the quail's note, and so lure the birds into a net.

honest gentleman that had dined with us; and could not but consider with a great deal of concern, how so good an heart and such busy hands were wholly employed in trifles; that so much humanity should be so little beneficial to others, and so much industry so little advantageous to himself. The same temper of mind and application to affairs might have recommended him to the public esteem, and have raised his fortune in another station of life. What good to his country or himself might not a trader or merchant have done with such useful though ordinary qualifications?

Will Wimble's is the case of many a younger brother of a great family, who had rather see their children starve like gentlemen, than thrive in a trade or profession that is beneath their quality. This humour fills several parts of Europe with pride and beggary. It is the happiness of a trading nation, like ours, that the younger sons, though incapable of any liberal art or profession, may be placed in such a way of life, as may perhaps enable them to vie with the best of their family: accordingly we find several citizens that were launched into the world with narrow fortunes, rising by an honest industry to greater estates than those of their elder brothers. It is not improbable but Will was formerly tried at divinity, law, or physic; and that finding his genius did not lie that way, his parents gave him up at length to his own inventions: but certainly, however improper he might have been for studies of a higher

Humour. Fixed idea, prejudice.

nature, he was perfectly well turned for the occupations of trade and commerce. As I think this is a point which cannot be too much inculcated, I shall desire my reader to compare what I have here written with what I have said in my twenty-first speculation.

ADDISON (*The Spectator*, No. 108).

XI.—SIR ROGER AT CHURCH

I AM always very well pleased with a country Sunday; and think, if keeping holy the seventh day were only a human institution, it would be the best method that could have been thought of for the polishing and civilising of mankind. It is certain the country-people would soon degenerate into a kind of savages and barbarians, were there not such frequent returns of a stated time, in which the whole village meet together with their best faces, and in their cleanliest habits, to converse with one another upon indifferent subjects, hear their duties explained to them, and join together in adoration of the Supreme Being. Sunday clears away the rust of the whole week, not only as it refreshes in their minds the notions of religion, but as it puts both the sexes upon appearing in their most agreeable forms, and exerting all such qualities as are apt to give them a figure in the eye of the village. A country-fellow distinguishes himself as much in the churchyard, as a citizen does upon

Indifferent. General, not their nearest interests.

the change; the whole parish-politics being generally discussed in that place either after sermon or before the bell rings.

My friend Sir Roger being a good churchman, has beautified the inside of his church with several texts of his own choosing: he has likewise given a handsome pulpit-cloth, and railed in the communion table at his own expense. He has often told me, that at his coming to his estate he found his parishioners very irregular; and that in order to make them kneel and join in the responses, he gave every one of them a hassock and a common-prayer book: and at the same time employed an itinerant singing-master, who goes about the country for that purpose, to instruct them rightly in the tunes of the psalms; upon which they now very much value themselves, and indeed outdo most of the country churches that I have ever heard.

As Sir Roger is landlord to the whole congregation, he keeps them in very good order, and will suffer nobody to sleep in it besides himself; for if by chance he has been surprised into a short nap at sermon, upon recovering out of it he stands up and looks about him, and if he sees anybody else nodding, either wakes them himself, or sends his servants to them. Several other of the old knight's particularities break out upon these occasions: sometimes he will be lengthening out a verse in the singing-psalms, half a minute after the rest of the congregation have done with it; sometimes, when he is pleased with the

Particularities. Peculiarities.

hardly brought to regard any truth, how important soever it may be, that is preached to them, when they know there are several men of five hundred a year who do not believe it.

ADDISON (*The Spectator*, No. 112).

XII.—SIR ROGER AT WESTMINSTER ABBEY

MY friend Sir Roger de Coverley told me t'other night, that he had been reading my paper upon Westminster Abbey, in which, says he, there are a great many ingenious fancies. He told me at the same time, that he observed I had promised another paper upon the tombs, and that he should be glad to go and see them with me, not having visited them since he had read history. I could not at first imagine how this came into the knight's head, till I recollected that he had been very busy all last summer upon Baker's *Chronicle*, which he has quoted several times in his disputes with Sir Andrew Freeport since his last coming to town. Accordingly I promised to call upon him the next morning, that we might go together to the Abbey.

I found the knight under his butler's hands, who always shaves him. He was no sooner dressed, than

Hardly brought to regard. Are with great difficulty induced to attend to.

Paper upon Westminster Abbey. No. 26 of *The Spectator.*
Baker's Chronicle. Of the Kings of England, 1643.

to him myself, if I had not been a blockhead: a very great man!"

We were immediately conducted into the little chapel on the right hand. Sir Roger, planting himself at our historian's elbow, was very attentive to everything he said, particularly to the account he gave us of the lord who had cut off the king of Morocco's head. Among several other figures, he was very well pleased to see the statesman Cecil upon his knees; and, concluding them all to be great men, was conducted to the figure which represents that martyr to good housewifery, who died by the prick of a needle. Upon our interpreter's telling us, that she was a maid of honour to Queen Elizabeth, the knight was very inquisitive into her name and family, and, after having regarded her finger for some time, I wonder, says he, that Sir Richard Baker has said nothing of her in his Chronicle.

We were then conveyed to the two coronation chairs, where my old friend, after having heard that the stone underneath the most ancient of them, which was brought from Scotland, was called Jacob's Pillar, sat himself down in the chair, and looking like the figure of an old Gothic king, asked our interpreter, what authority they had to say, that Jacob had ever been in Scotland? The fellow, instead of

Chapel. Of St. Edmund. *Historian.* Guide.

Martyr. Elizabeth Russell, an aunt of Bacon; the story is unfounded.

Two coronation chairs. The second was made when William and Mary were crowned together.

Brought from Scotland. In 1296, by Edward I

returning him an answer, told him, that he hoped his honour would pay his forfeit. I could observe Sir Roger a little ruffled upon being thus trepanned; but our guide not insisting upon his demand, the knight soon recovered his good humour, and whispered in my ear, that if Will Wimble were with us, and saw those two chairs, it would go hard but he would get a tobacco-stopper out of one or t'other of them.

Sir Roger, in the next place, laid his hand upon Edward III's sword, and leaning upon the pommel of it, gave us the whole history of the Black Prince; concluding, that in Sir Richard's Baker's opinion, Edward the Third was one of the greatest princes that ever sat upon the English throne.

We were then shown Edward the Confessor's tomb; upon which Sir Roger acquainted us, that he was the first who touched for the evil; and afterwards Henry the Fourth's, upon which he shook his head, and told us, there was fine reading in the casualties of that reign.

Our conductor then pointed to that monument, where there is the figure of one of our English kings without an head; and upon giving us to know, that the head, which was of beaten silver, had been stolen away several years since: "Some Whig, I warrant you," says Sir Roger; "you ought to lock up your kings better: they will carry off the body too, if you don't take care."

Trepanned. Caught.

Evil. A disease, for which the royal touch was believed to be a remedy.

One of our English kings. Henry V.

The glorious names of Henry the Fifth and Queen Elizabeth gave the knight great opportunities of shining, and of doing justice to Sir Richard Baker, who, as our knight observed with some surprise, had a great many kings in him, whose monuments he had not seen in the Abbey.

For my own part, I could not but be pleased to see the knight show such an honest passion for the glory of his country, and such a respectful gratitude to the memory of its princes.

I must not omit, that the benevolence of my good old friend, which flows out towards every one he converses with, made him very kind to our interpreter, whom he looked upon as an extraordinary man; for which reason he shook him by the hand at parting, telling him, that he should be very glad to see him at his lodgings in Norfolk Buildings, and talk over these matters with him more at leisure.

ADDISON (*The Spectator*, No. 329).

XIII.—A PASSAGE IN "MACBETH"

IT has been observed by Boileau, that "a mean or common thought expressed in pompous diction, generally pleases more than a new or noble sentiment delivered in low or vulgar language; because the number is greater of those whom custom has enabled

Passion. Feeling, emotion.
Boileau. A great French critic and writer of verse, [illegible]-1711.
Pompous. Splendid, stately.

embodies sentiment, and animates matter; yet, perhaps, scarce any man now peruses it without some disturbance of his attention from the counter-action of the words to the ideas. What can be more dreadful than to implore the presence of night, invested, not in common obscurity, but in the smoke of hell? Yet the efficacy of this invocation is destroyed by the insertion of an epithet now seldom heard but in the stable, and *dun* night may come or go without any other notice than contempt.

If we start into raptures when some hero of the *Iliad* tells us that δόρυ μαίνεται, his lance rages with eagerness to destroy; if we are alarmed at the terror of the soldiers commanded by Cæsar to hew down the sacred grove, who dreaded, says Lucan, lest the axe aimed at the oak should fly back upon the striker:

> *Si robora sacra ferirent,*
> *In sua credebant redituras membra secures,*
>
> None dares with impious steel the grove to rend,
> Lest on himself the destined stroke descend;

we cannot surely but sympathise with the horrors of a wretch about to murder his master, his friend, his benefactor, who suspects that the weapon will refuse its office, and start back from the breast which he is preparing to violate. Yet this sentiment is weakened by the name of an instrument used by butchers and cooks in the meanest employments: we do not immediately conceive that any crime of importance is to be committed with a *knife*; or who

Invested. For Shakespeare's "pall."

An acquaintance with prevailing customs and fashionable elegance is necessary likewise for other purposes. The injury that grand imagery suffers from unsuitable language, personal merit may fear from rudeness and indelicacy. When the success of Æneas depended on the favour of the queen upon whose coasts he was driven, his celestial protectress thought him not sufficiently secured against rejection by his piety or bravery, but decorated him for the interview with preternatural beauty. Whoever desires, for his writings or himself, what none can reasonably contemn, the favour of mankind, must add grace to strength, and make his thoughts agreeable as well as useful. Many complain of neglect who never tried to attract regard. It cannot be expected that the patrons of science or virtue should be solicitous to discover excellencies, which they who possess them shade and disguise. Few have abilities so much needed by the rest of the world as to be caressed on their own terms; and he that will not condescend to recommend himself by external embellishments, must submit to the fate of just sentiment meanly expressed, and be ridiculed and forgotten before he is understood.

JOHNSON (*The Rambler*, No. 168).

Æneas. The hero of Virgil's *Æneid.*
Queen. Dido, queen of Carthage.
Celestial protectress. Venus, his mother.

doubling, and gained upon us each moment; so that at last we fairly stood still, resolving to face what we could not avoid.

Our pursuer soon came up, and joined us with all the familiarity of an old acquaintance. "My dear Drybone," cries he, shaking my friend's hand, "where have you been hiding this half a century? Positively I had fancied you were gone down to cultivate matrimony and your estate in the country." During the reply, I had an opportunity of surveying the appearance of our new companion; his hat was pinched up with peculiar smartness; his looks were pale, thin, and sharp; round his neck he wore a broad black ribbon, and in his bosom a buckle studded with glass; his coat was trimmed with tarnished twist; he wore by his side a sword with a black hilt, and his stockings of silk, though newly washed, were grown yellow by long service. I was so much engaged with the peculiarity of his dress, that I attended only to the latter part of my friend's reply, in which he complimented Mr. Tibbs on the taste of his clothes, and the bloom in his countenance: "Psha, psha, Will," cried the figure, "no more of that if you love me, you know I hate flattery, on my soul I do; and yet to be sure an intimacy with the great will improve one's appearance, and a course of venison will fatten; and yet faith I despise the great as much as you do; but there are a great many damned honest fellows among them; and we must not quarrel with one half, because the other wants weeding. If they were all such as my Lord Muddler, one of the most good-

it go no further; a secret: well, there happened to be no assafœtida in the sauce to a turkey, upon which, says I, I'll hold a thousand guineas, and say done first, that—but, dear Drybone, you are an honest creature, lend me half-a-crown for a minute or two, or so, just till—but heark'ee, ask me for it the next time we meet, or it may be twenty to one but I forget to pay you."

When he left us, our conversation naturally turned upon so extraordinary a character. "His very dress," cries my friend, "is not less extraordinary than his conduct. If you meet him this day you find him in rags, if the next in embroidery. With those persons of distinction, of whom he talks so familiarly, he has scarcely a coffee-house acquaintance. However, both for the interests of society, and perhaps for his own, heaven has made him poor, and while all the world perceive his wants, he fancies them concealed from every eye. An agreeable companion because he understands flattery, and all must be pleased with the first part of his conversation, though all are sure of its ending with a demand on their purse. While his youth countenances the levity of his conduct, he may thus earn a precarious subsistence, but when age comes on, the gravity of which is incompatible with buffoonery, then will he find himself forsaken by all: condemned in the decline of life to hang upon some rich family whom he once despised, there to undergo all the ingenuity of studied contempt, to be employed only as a spy

Assafœtida. A resinous gum used for flavouring.

upon the servants, or a bug-bear to frighten the children into obedience."

OLIVER GOLDSMITH (*The Citizen of the World*, No. 53).

XV.—THE TRIFLER'S HOUSEHOLD

I AM apt to fancy I have contracted a new acquaintance whom it will be no easy matter to shake off. My little beau yesterday overtook me again in one of the public walks, and slapping me on the shoulder, saluted me with an air of the most perfect familiarity. His dress was the same as usual, except that he had more powder in his hair, wore a dirtier shirt, a pair of temple spectacles, and his hat under his arm.

As I knew him to be an harmless amusing little thing, I could not return his smiles with any degree of severity; so we walked forward on terms of the utmost intimacy, and in a few minutes discussed all the usual topics preliminary to particular conversation.

The oddities that marked his character, however, soon began to appear; he bowed to several well-dressed persons, who, by their manner of returning the compliment, appeared perfect strangers. At intervals he drew out a pocket-book, seeming to take memorandums before all the company, with much importance and assiduity. In this manner he led me

Temple spectacles. Spectacles with jointed side-limbs, that grasp the temples.

through the length of the whole walk, fretting at his absurdities, and fancying myself laughed at not less than him by every spectator.

When we were got to the end of our procession, "Blast me," cries he, with an air of vivacity, "I never saw the park so thin in my life before; there's no company at all to-day. Not a single face to be seen."—"No company," interrupted I peevishly; "no company where there is such a crowd; why man, there's too much. What are the thousands that have been laughing at us but company!"—"Lard my dear," returned he, with the utmost good-humour, "you seem immensely chagrined; but blast me, when the world laughs at me, I laugh at all the world, and so we are even. My Lord Trip, Bill Squash the Creolian, and I, sometimes make a party at being ridiculous; and so we say and do a thousand things for the joke. But I see you are grave, and if you are for a fine grave sentimental companion, you shall dine with me and my wife to-day, I must insist on't; I'll introduce you to Mrs. Tibbs, a lady of as elegant qualifications as any in nature; she was bred, but that's between ourselves, under the inspection of the Countess of All-night. A charming body of voice, but no more of that, she will give us a song. You shall see my little girl too, Carolina Wilhelmina Amelia Tibbs, a sweet pretty creature: I design her for my Lord Drumstick's eldest son, but that's in friendship, let it go no further; she's but six years old, and yet she

But that's in friendship. I.e., I tell you as a friend.

walks a minuet, and plays on the guitar immensely already. I intend she shall be as perfect as possible in every accomplishment. In the first place I'll make her a scholar; I'll teach her Greek myself, and learn that language purposely to instruct her; but let that be a secret."

Thus saying, without waiting for a reply, he took me by the arm, and hauled me along. We passed through many dark alleys and winding ways; for, from some motives to me unknown, he seemed to have a particular aversion to every frequented street; at last, however, we got to the door of a dismal looking house in the outlets of the town, where he told me he chose to reside for the benefit of the air.

We entered the lower door, which ever seemed to lie most hospitably open; and I began to ascend an old and creaking stair-case, when, as he mounted to show me the way, he demanded, whether I delighted in prospects, to which answering in the affirmative, "Then," says he, "I shall show you one of the most charming in the world out of my windows; we shall see the ships sailing, and the whole country for twenty miles round, tip top, quite high. My Lord Swamp would give ten thousand guineas for such a one; but as I sometimes pleasantly tell him, I always love to keep my prospects at home, that my friends may see me the oftener."

By this time we were arrived as high as the stairs would permit us to ascend, till we came to what he

Prospects. Views, scenery.

was facetiously pleased to call the first floor down the chimney; and knocking at the door, a voice from within demanded, "Who's there?" My conductor answered, that it was him. But this not satisfying the querist, the voice again repeated the demand: to which he answered louder than before; and now the door was opened by an old woman with cautious reluctance.

When we were got in, he welcomed me to his house with great ceremony, and turning to the old woman, asked where was her lady? "Good troth," replied she, in a peculiar dialect, "she's washing your two shirts at the next door, because they have taken an oath against lending out the tub any longer."—"My two shirts," cries he in a tone that faultered with confusion, "what does the idiot mean!"—"I ken what I mean well enough," replied the other, "she's washing your two shirts at the next door, because——"—"Fire and fury, no more of thy stupid explanations," cried he,—"Go and inform her we have got company. Were that Scotch hag to be for ever in the family, she would never learn politeness, nor forget that absurd poisonous accent of hers, or testify the smallest specimen of breeding or high life; and yet it is very surprising too, as I had her from a parliament-man, a friend of mine, from the Highlands, one of the politest men in the world; but that's a secret."

We waited some time for Mrs. Tibbs's arrival, during which interval I had a full opportunity of surveying the chamber and all its furniture; which

consisted of four chairs with old wrought bottoms, that he assured me were his wife's embroidery; a square table that had been once japanned, a cradle in one corner, a lumbering cabinet in the other; a broken shepherdess, and a mandarin without a head, were stuck over the chimney; and round the walls several paltry, unframed pictures, which he observed, were all his own drawing: "What do you think, sir, of that head in a corner, done in the manner of Grisoni? there's the true keeping in it; it's my own face, and though there happens to be no likeness, a countess offered me an hundred for its fellow; I refused her, for, hang it, that would be mechanical, you know."

The wife at last made her appearance, at once a slattern and a coquet; much emaciated, but still carrying the remains of beauty. She made twenty apologies for being seen in such odious dishabille, but hoped to be excused, as she had stayed out all night at the gardens with the countess, who was excessively fond of the horns. "And, indeed, my dear," added she, turning to her husband, "his lordship drank your health in a bumper."—"Poor Jack," cries he, "a dear good-natured creature, I know he loves me; but I hope, my dear, you have given orders for dinner; you need make no great preparations neither, there are but three of us, something elegant, and little will do; a turbot, an ortolan,

True keeping. Harmony of colour and composition, here there is a parody of art slang.

Mechanical. Mean, vulgar. *Dishabille.* Undress.

Horns. I.e., music played on the French horns at Vauxhall.

or a——" "Or what do you think, my dear," interrupts the wife, "of a nice pretty bit of ox-cheek, piping hot, and dressed with a little of my own sauce?"—"The very thing," replies he, "it will eat best with some smart bottled beer; but be sure to let's have the sauce his grace was so fond of. I hate your immense loads of meat, that is country all over; extreme disgusting to those who are in the least acquainted with high life."

By this time my curiosity began to abate, and my appetite to increase; the company of fools may at first make us smile, but at last never fails of rendering us melancholy; I therefore pretended to recollect a prior engagement, and after having shown my respect to the house, according to the fashion of the English, by giving the old servant a piece of money at the door, I took my leave; Mr. Tibbs assuring me that dinner, if I staid, would be ready at least in less than two hours.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH (*The Citizen of the World*, No. 54).

XVI.—WESTMINSTER HALL

I HAD some intentions lately of going to visit Bedlam, the place where those who go mad are confined. I went to wait upon the man in black to be my conductor; but I found him preparing to go to Westminster Hall, where the English hold their

That is country all over. Bacon would have written "right country."

returned he, "that I have Salkeld and Ventris strong in my favour, and that there are no less than fifteen cases in point."—"I understand," said I, "those are two of your judges who have already declared their opinions."—"Pardon me," replied my friend "Salkeld and Ventris are lawyers who some hundred years ago gave their opinions on cases similar to mine; these opinions which make for me my lawyer is to cite, and those opinions which look another way are cited by the lawyer employed by my antagonist; as I observed, I have Salkeld and Ventris for me, he has Coke and Hale for him, and he that has most opinions is most likely to carry his cause." —"But where is the necessity," cried I, "of prolonging a suit by citing the opinions and reports of others, since the same good sense which determined lawyers in former ages may serve to guide your judges at this day? They at that time gave their opinions only from the light of reason; your judges have the same light at present to direct *them*, let me even add a greater, as in former ages there were many prejudices from which the present is happily free. If arguing from authorities be exploded from every other branch of learning, why should it be particularly adhered to in this? I plainly foresee how such a method of investigation must embarrass every suit, and even perplex the student; ceremonies will be multiplied, formalities must increase, and more time will thus be spent in learning the arts of litigation than in the discovery of right."

Exploded. Banished; literally, hissed off the stage.

"I see," cries my friend, "that you are for a speedy administration of justice; but all the world will grant that the more time that is taken up in considering any subject the better it will be understood. Besides, it is the boast of an Englishman, that his property is secure, and all the world will grant that a deliberate administration of justice is the best way to *secure his property.* Why have we so many lawyers, but *to secure our property?* why so many formalities, but *to secure our property?* Not less than one hundred thousand families live in opulence, elegance, and ease, merely by *securing our property.*"

"To embarrass justice," returned I, "by a multiplicity of laws, or to hazard it by a confidence in our judges, are, I grant, the opposite rocks on which legislative wisdom has ever split; in one case the client resembles that emperor, who is said to have been suffocated by the bed-clothes, which were only designed to keep him warm: in the other, to that town which let the enemy take possession of its walls, in order to show the world how little they depended upon aught but courage for safety:——But, bless me, what numbers do I see here—all in black—how is it possible that half this multitude find employment?"—"Nothing so easily conceived," returned my companion, "they live by watching each other. For instance, the catchpole watches the man in debt;

Catchpole. The catchpole was the sheriff's officer who arrested the debtor; the attorney and solicitor were the legal agents of the creditor; the counsellor (now barrister) conducted in court the case prepared by them.

the attorney watches the catchpole; the counsellor watches the attorney; the solicitor the counsellor; and all find sufficient employment."—"I conceive you," interrupted I, "they watch each other; but it is the client that pays them all for watching: it puts me in mind of a Chinese fable, which is intituled, 'Five animals at a meal.'

"A grasshopper, filled with dew, was merrily singing under a shade; a whangam, that eats grasshoppers, had marked it for its prey, and was just stretching forth to devour it; a serpent, that had for a long time fed only on whangams, was coiled up to fasten on the whangam; a yellow bird was just upon the wing to dart upon the serpent; Chawak had just stooped from above to seize the yellow bird; all were intent on their prey, and unmindful of their danger: so the whangam ate the grasshopper, the serpent ate the whangam, the yellow bird the serpent, and the hawk the yellow bird; when sousing from on high, a vulture gobbled up the hawk, grasshopper, whangam, and all in a moment."

I had scarcely finished my fable, when the lawyer came to inform my friend that his cause was put off till another term, that money was wanted to retain, and that all the world was of opinion that the very next hearing would bring him off victorious. "If so, then," cries my friend, "I believe it will be my wisest way to continue the cause for another

Sousing. Swooping.
Retain. To ensure the further services of his lawyers.

term, and, in the meantime, my friend here and I will go and see Bedlam."

OLIVER GOLDSMITH (*The Citizen of the World*, No. 97).

XVII.—CHRIST'S HOSPITAL FIVE AND THIRTY YEARS AGO

IN Mr. Lamb's *Works*, published a year or two since, I find a magnificent eulogy on my old school, such as it was, or now appears to him to have been, between the years 1782 and 1789. It happens, very oddly, that my own standing at Christ's was nearly corresponding with his; and, with all gratitude to him for his enthusiasm for the cloisters, I think he has contrived to bring together whatever can be said in praise of them, dropping all the other side of the argument most ingeniously.

I remember L. at school; and can well recollect that he had some peculiar advantages, which I and others of his schoolfellows had not. His friends lived in town, and were near at hand; and he had the privilege of going to see them, almost as often as he wished, through some invidious distinction, which was denied to us. The present worthy sub-treasurer to the Inner Temple can explain how that happened.

I. This essay pretends to be written by Coleridge, Lamb's schoolfellow at Christ's Hospital, the "Blue-coat School." The pretence is dropped later. L. is Lamb himself.

Eulogy on my old school. Lamb's *Recollections of Christ's Hospital.*

Sub-treasurer. Mr. Norris, a true and loved friend of the Lamb family.

He had his tea and hot rolls in a morning, while we were battening upon our quarter of a penny loaf —our *crug*—moistened with attenuated small beer, in wooden piggins, smacking of the pitched leathern jack it was poured from. Our Monday's milk porritch, blue and tasteless, and the pease soup of Saturday, coarse and choking, were enriched for him with a slice of "extraordinary bread and butter," from the hot-loaf of the Temple. The Wednesday's mess of millet, somewhat less repugnant—(we had three banyan to four meat days in the week)—was endeared to his palate with a lump of double-refined, and a smack of ginger (to make it go down the more glibly) or the fragrant cinnamon. In lieu of our *half-pickled* Sundays, or *quite fresh* boiled beef on Thursdays (strong as *caro equina*), with detestable marigolds floating in the pail to poison the broth—our scanty mutton scrags on Fridays—and rather more savoury, but grudging, portions of the same flesh, rotten-roasted or rare, on the Tuesdays (the only dish which excited our appetites, and disappointed our stomachs, in almost equal proportion) —he had his hot plate of roast veal, of the more tempting griskin (exotics unknown to our palates), cooked in the paternal kitchen (a great thing), and brought him daily by his maid or aunt! I remember the good old relative (in whom love forbade pride) squatting down upon some odd stone in a by-nook

Banyan. Vegetarian.
Caro equina. Horse-flesh.
Exotics. Foreign rarities.
Double-refined. I.e., sugar.
Griskin. Pork chops.

of the cloisters, disclosing the viands (of higher regale than those cates which the ravens ministered to the Tishbite); and the contending passions of L. at the unfolding. There was love for the bringer; shame for the thing brought, and the manner of its bringing; sympathy for those who were too many to share in it; and, at top of all, hunger (eldest, strongest of the passions!) predominant, breaking down the stony fences of shame, and awkwardness, and a troubling over-consciousness.

I was a poor friendless boy. My parents, and those who should care for me, were far away. Those few acquaintances of theirs, which they could reckon upon being kind to me in the great city, after a little forced notice, which they had the grace to take of me on my first arrival in town, soon grew tired of my holiday visits. They seemed to them to recur too often, though I thought them few enough; and, one after another, they all failed me, and I felt myself alone among six hundred playmates.

O the cruelty of separating a poor lad from his early homestead! The yearnings which I used to have towards it in those unfledged years! How, in my dreams, would my native town (far in the west) come back, with its church, and trees, and faces! How I would wake weeping, and in the anguish of my heart exclaim upon sweet Calne in Wiltshire!

Regale. Refreshment   *Cates.* Delicacies.
Tishbite. Elijah; see I. Kings xvii. 1–7.
Passions. Feelings, emotions.
Calne in Wiltshire. Coleridge's real home was at Ottery St. Mary, Devon.

To this late hour of my life, I trace impressions left by the recollection of those friendless holidays The long warm days of summer never return but they bring with them a gloom from the haunting memory of those *whole-day-leaves,* when, by some strange arrangement, we were turned out, for the live-long day, upon our own hands, whether we had friends to go to, or none. I remember those bathing excursions to the New River, which L. recalls with such relish, better, I think, than he can—for he was a home-seeking lad, and did not much care for such water-pastimes: How merrily we would sally forth into the fields; and strip under the first warmth of the sun; and wanton like young dace in the streams; getting us appetites for noon, which those of us that were penniless (our scanty morning crust long since exhausted) had not the means of allaying—while the cattle, and the birds, and the fishes, were at feed about us, and we had nothing to satisfy our cravings—the very beauty of the day, and the exercise of the pastime, and the sense of liberty, setting a keener edge upon them!—How faint and languid, finally we would return, towards nightfall, to our desired morsel, half-rejoicing, half-reluctant, that the hours of our uneasy liberty had expired!

It was worse in the days of winter, to go prowling about the street objectless—shivering at cold windows of print-shops, to extract a little amusement; or haply, as a last resort, in the hopes of a little novelty, to pay a fifty-times repeated visit (where our individual faces should be as well known to the

warden as those of his own charges) to the Lions in the Tower—to whose levée, by courtesy immemorial, we had a prescriptive title to admission.

L.'s governor (so we called the patron who presented us to the foundation) lived in a manner under his paternal roof. Any complaint which he had to make was sure of being attended to. This was understood at Christ's, and was an effectual screen to him against the severity of masters, or worse tyranny of the monitors. The oppressions of these young brutes are heart-sickening to call to recollection. I have been called out of my bed, and *waked for the purpose*, in the coldest winter nights—and this not once, but night after night—in my shirt, to receive the discipline of a leathern thong, with eleven other sufferers, because it pleased my callow overseer, when there has been any talking heard after we were gone to bed, to make the six last beds in the dormitory, where the youngest children of us slept, answerable for an offence they neither dared to commit, nor had the power to hinder.—The same execrable tyranny drove the younger part of us from the fires, when our feet were perishing with snow; and under the cruellest penalties, forbade the indulgence of a drink of water, when we lay in sleepless summer nights, fevered with the season, and the day's sports.

There was one H——, who, I learned, in after days, was seen expiating some maturer offence in

Levée. The state reception held by a monarch—here the king of beasts. The lions were removed in 1831 to the Zoological Gardens.

Callow. Young: literally unfledged.

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underwent any censure on the occasion. This was in the stewardship of L.'s admired Perry.

Under the same *facile* administration, can L. have forgotten the cool impunity with which the nurses used to carry away openly, in open platters, for their own tables, one out of two of every hot joint, which the careful matron had been seeing scrupulously weighed out for our dinners? These things were daily practised in that magnificent apartment, which L. (grown connoisseur since, we presume) praises so highly for the grand paintings "by Verrio, and others," with which it is "hung round and adorned." But the sight of sleek, well-fed blue-coat boys in pictures was, at that time, I believe, little consolatory to him, or us, the living ones, who saw the better part of our provisions carried away before our faces by harpies; and ourselves reduced (with the Trojan in the hall of Dido)

To feed our mind with idle portraiture.

L. has recorded the repugnance of the school to *gags*, or the fat of fresh beef boiled; and sets it down to some superstition. But these unctuous morsels are never grateful to young palates (children are universally fat-haters) and in strong, coarse, boiled meats, *unsalted*, are detestable. A *gag-eater* in

Verrio. An Italian decorative painter. He pictured James II. receiving the pupils of Christ's Hospital.

Harpies. Fabulous women-birds, who defiled the feasts of Phineus; Virgil, *Æneid*, iii. 212.

The Trojan. Æneas.

To feed our mind, etc. Translated from Virgil *Æneid*, i. 464.

the hulks. (Do I flatter myself in fancying that this might be the planter of that name, who suffered—at Nevis, I think, or St. Kitts,—some few years since? My friend Tobin was the benevolent instrument of bringing him to the gallows.) This petty Nero actually branded a boy, who had offended him, with a red-hot iron; and nearly starved forty of us, with exacting contributions, to the one half of our bread, to pamper a young ass, which, incredible as it may seem, with the connivance of the nurse's daughter (a young flame of his) he had contrived to smuggle in, and keep upon the leads of the *ward*, as they called our dormitories. This game went on for better than a week, till the foolish beast, not able to fare well but he must cry roast meat—happier than Caligula's minion, could he have kept his own counsel—but, foolisher, alas! than any of his species in the fables—waxing fat, and kicking, in the fulness of bread, one unlucky minute would needs proclaim his good fortune to the world below; and, laying out his simple throat, blew such a ram's horn blast, as (toppling down the walls of his own Jericho) set concealment any longer at defiance. The client was dismissed, with certain attentions, to Smithfield; but I never understood that the patron

Hulks. Used as convict prisons.

Roast meat. Beaumont and Fletcher, *Monsieur Thomas*, iii. 1.

Caligula's minion. The horse which the mad Roman emperor Caligula made consul, and fed on gilded oats.

Jericho. See Joshua vi.

Smithfield. The cattle-market.

the secret, and had traced him one leave-day for the purpose, to enter a large worn-out building, such as there exist specimens of in Chancery Lane, which are let out to various scales of pauperism, with *open* door, and a common staircase. After him they silently slunk in, and followed by stealth up four flights, and saw him tap at a poor wicket, which was opened by an aged woman, meanly clad. Suspicion was now ripened into certainty. The informers had secured their victim. They had him in their toils. Accusation was formally preferred, and retribution most signal was looked for. Mr. Hathaway, the then steward (for this happened a little after my time), with that patient sagacity which tempered all his conduct, determined to investigate the matter, before he proceeded to sentence. The result was, that the supposed mendicants, the receivers or purchasers of the mysterious scraps, turned out to be the parents of ——, an honest couple come to decay,—whom this seasonable supply had, in all probability, saved from mendicancy; and that this young stork, at the expense of his own good name, had all this while been only feeding the old birds!—The governors on this occasion, much to their honour, voted a present relief to the family of ——, and presented him with a silver medal. The lesson which the steward read upon RASH JUDGMENT, on the occasion of publicly delivering the medal to ——, I believe, would not be lost upon his auditory.—I had left school then, but I well remember ——. He was a tall, shambling

Young stork. The figure is from Drayton, *Noah's Flood*.

our time was equivalent to a *goule*, and held in equal detestation. —— suffered under the imputation.

> —— 'Twas said,
> He ate strange flesh.

He was observed, after dinner, carefully to gather up the remnants left at his table (not many, nor very choice fragments, you may credit me)—and, in an especial manner, these disreputable morsels, which he would convey away, and secretly stow in the settle that stood at his bed-side. None saw when he ate them. It was rumoured that he privately devoured them in the night. He was watched, but no traces of such midnight practices were discoverable. Some reported, that, on leave-days, he had been seen to carry out of the bounds a large blue check handkerchief, full of something. This then must be the accursed thing. Conjecture next was at work to imagine how he could dispose of it. Some said he sold it to the beggars. This belief generally prevailed. He went about moping. None spake to him. No one would play with him. He was excommunicated; put out of the pale of the school. He was too powerful a boy to be beaten, but he underwent every mode of that negative punishment, which is more grievous than many stripes. Still he persevered. At length he was observed by two of his school-fellows, who were determined to get at

Goule, or *ghoul*. An Eastern demon that feeds on the dead.

'Twas said, etc. Altered from *Antony and Cleopatra*, i. 4.

Accursed thing. Joshua vii. 13.

youth, with a cast in his eye, not at all calculated to conciliate hostile prejudices. I have since seen him carrying a baker's basket. I think I heard he did not do quite so well by himself, as he had done by the old folks.

I was a hypochondriac lad; and the sight of a boy in fetters, upon the day of my first putting on the blue clothes, was not exactly fitted to assuage the natural terrors of initiation. I was of tender years, barely turned of seven ; and had only read of such things in books, or seen them but in dreams. I was told he had *run away*. This was the punishment for the first offence.—As a novice I was soon after taken to see the dungeons. These were little, square Bedlam cells, where a boy could just lie at his length upon straw and a blanket—a mattress, I think, was afterwards substituted—with a peep of light, let in askance, from a prison-orifice at top, barely enough to read by. Here the poor boy was locked in by himself all day, without sight of any but the porter who brought him his bread and water—who *might not speak to him* ;—or of the beadle, who came twice a week to call him out to receive his periodical chastisement, which was almost welcome, because it separated him for a brief interval from solitude:—and here he was shut up by himself *of nights*, out of the reach of any sound, to suffer whatever horrors the weak nerves, and superstition incident to his time of life,

Hypochondriac. Low-spirited, morbidly imaginative.

Bedlam cells. Cells like those for the lunatics in Bethlehem Hospital, London.

might subject him to.[1] This was the penalty for the second offence.—Wouldst thou like, reader, to see what became of him in the next degree?

The culprit, who had been a third time an offender, and whose expulsion was at this time deemed irreversible, was brought forth, as at some solemn *auto da fé*, arrayed in uncouth and most appalling attire—all trace of his late "watchet weeds" carefully effaced, he was exposed in a jacket, resembling those which London lamplighters formerly delighted in, with a cap of the same. The effect of this divestiture was such as the ingenious devisers of it could have anticipated. With his pale and frighted features, it was as if some of those disfigurements in Dante had seized upon him. In this disguisement he was brought into the hall (*L.'s favourite state-room*), where awaited him the whole number of his schoolfellows, whose joint lessons and sports he was thenceforth to share no more; the awful presence of the steward, to be

[1] One or two instances of lunacy, or attempted suicide, accordingly, at length convinced the governors of the impolicy of this part of the sentence, and the midnight torture to the spirits was dispensed with.—This fancy of dungeons for children was a sprout of Howard's brain; for which (saving the reverence due to Holy Paul), methinks, I could willingly spit upon his statue. [Lamb's note.]

Auto da fé. The burning of heretics under the Spanish Inquisition; literally, act of faith.

Watchet weeds. Blue clothes, the school uniform. Collins, in *The Manners*, speaks of "Seine's blue nymphs, in watchet weeds."

Disfigurements in Dante. Punishments of the damned, in Dante's *Inferno*.

Howard. The reformer of prisons in England and abroad. His statue is in St. Paul's Cathedral.

seen for the last time; of the executioner beadle, clad in his state robe for the occasion; and of two faces more, of direr import, because never but in these extremities visible. These were the governors; two of whom, by choice, or charter, were always accustomed to officiate at these *Ultima Supplicia*; not to mitigate (so at least we understood it), but to enforce the uttermost stripe. Old Bamber Gascoigne, and Peter Aubert, I remember, were colleagues on one occasion, when the beadle turning rather pale, a glass of brandy was ordered to prepare him for the mysteries. The scourging was, after the old Roman fashion, long and stately. The lictor accompanied the criminal quite round the hall. We were generally too faint with attending to the previous disgusting circumstances, to make accurate report with our eyes of the degree of corporal suffering inflicted. Report, of course, gave out the back knotty and livid. After scourging, he was made over, in his *San Benito*, to his friends, if he had any (but commonly such poor runagates were friendless), or to his parish officer, who, to enhance the effect of the scene, had his station allotted to him on the outside of the hall gate.

These solemn pageantries were not played off so

Ultima Supplicia. Final punishments; the usual sense is "executions."

Mysteries. Secret religious ceremonies of the Greeks; here the word is grimly used.

Lictor. Lictors carried the *fasces* or rods—symbols of supreme power—before the Roman consuls.

San Benito. The dress worn by victims at an *auto da fé*.

away whole days from us; and when he came, it made no difference to us—he had his private room to retire to, the short time he stayed, to be out of the sound of our noise. Our mirth and uproar went on. We had classics of our own, without being beholden to "insolent Greece or haughty Rome," that passed current among us—*Peter Wilkins*—the *Adventures of the Hon. Capt. Robert Boyle*—the *Fortunate Blue Coat Boy*—and the like. Or we cultivated a turn for mechanic and scientific operations; making little sun-dials of paper; or weaving those ingenious parentheses, called *cat-cradles*; or making dry peas to dance upon the end of a tin pipe; or studying the art military over that laudable game "French and English," and a hundred other such devices to pass away the time—mixing the useful with the agreeable—as would have made the souls of Rousseau and John Locke chuckle to have seen us.

Matthew Field belonged to that class of modest divines who affect to mix in equal proportion the *gentleman*, the *scholar*, and the *Christian*; but, I know not how, the first ingredient is generally found to be the predominating dose in the composition. He was engaged in gay parties, or with his courtly bow

Insolent Greece, etc. Ben Jonson on Shakespeare.

Peter Wilkins. Written in 1750; a tale of adventures and flying women.

Parentheses. Because the hands and string resemble a sentence in curved brackets; or perhaps a pun on the original meaning, something "put in alongside," as the fingers are to the string.

As would have made, etc. Because they both advocated sympathetic methods in education.

came near, but never touched us; contrary to Gideon's miracle, while all around were drenched, our fleece was dry. His boys turned out the better scholars; we, I suspect, have the advantage in temper. His pupils cannot speak of him without something of terror allaying their gratitude; the remembrance of Field comes back with all the soothing images of indolence, and summer slumbers, and work like play, and innocent idleness, and Elysian exemptions, and life itself a "playing holiday."

Though sufficiently removed from the jurisdiction of Boyer, we were near enough (as I have said) to understand a little of his system. We occasionally heard sounds of the *Ululantes*, and caught glances of Tartarus. B. was a rabid pedant. His English style was cramped to barbarism. His Easter anthems (for his duty obliged him to those periodical flights) were grating as scrannel pipes.[1]—He would laugh, ay, and

[1] In this and everything B. was the antipodes of his coadjutor. While the former was digging his brains for crude anthems, worth a pig-nut, F. would be recreating his gentlemanly fancy in the more flowery walks of the Muses. A little dramatic effusion of his, under the name of *Vertumnus and Pomona*, is not yet forgotten by the chroniclers of that sort of literature. It was accepted by Garrick, but the town did not give it their sanction.—B. used to say of it, in a way of half-compliment, half-irony, that it was *too classical for representation*. [Lamb's note.]

Gideon's miracle. Judges vi. 37, 38; but see verses 39, 40.
Allaying. In the old sense "alloying"; mingling with.
Elysian exemptions. Elysium was the Greek abode of blessed souls; the wicked went to Tartarus, see below.
Playing holiday. I. Henry IV., i. 2. *Ululantes.* Yellers.
Scrannel. Meagre, harsh; from Milton, *Lycidas*, 124.
Garrick. See p. 141.

heartily, but then it must be at Flaccus's quibble about *Rex*—— or at the *tristis severitas in vultu*, or *inspicere in patinas*, of Terence—thin jests, which at their first broaching could hardly have had *vis* enough to move a Roman muscle.—He had two wigs, both pedantic, but of different omen. The one serene, smiling, fresh powdered, betokening a mild day. The other, an old discoloured, unkempt, angry caxon, denoting frequent and bloody execution. Woe to the school, when he made his morning appearance in his *passy*, or *passionate wig*. No comet expounded surer.—J. B. had a heavy hand. I have known him double his knotty fist at a poor trembling child (the maternal milk hardly dry upon its lips) with a "Sirrah, do you presume to set your wits at me?" —Nothing was more common than to see him make a headlong entry into the schoolroom, from his inner recess, or library, and, with turbulent eye, singling out a lad, roar out, "Od's my life, Sirrah" (his favourite adjuration), "I have a great mind to whip you,"—then, with as sudden a retracting impulse, fling back into his lair—and, after a cooling lapse of some minutes (during which all but the culprit had totally forgotten the context) drive headlong out again, piecing out his imperfect sense, as if it had been some Devil's Litany, with the expletory yell—

Rex. Horace's pun on a man named *Rex*=king.
Vis. Force.
Caxon. An obsolete sort of wig.
Comets were supposed to foretell disaster.
The maternal milk, etc. From *Winter's Tale*, iii. 2.
Expletory. Filling up the sense.

"*and I* WILL *too.*"—In his gentler moods, when the *rabidus furor* was assuaged, he had resort to an ingenious method, peculiar, for what I have heard, to himself, of whipping the boy, and reading the Debates, at the same time; a paragraph, and a lash between; which in those times, when parliamentary oratory was most at a height and flourishing in these realms, was not calculated to impress the patient with a veneration for the diffuser graces of rhetoric.

Once, and but once, the uplifted rod was known to fall ineffectual from his hand—when droll squinting W—— having been caught putting the inside of the master's desk to a use for which the architect had clearly not designed it, to justify himself, with great simplicity averred, that *he did not know that the thing had been forewarned.* This exquisite irrecognition of any law antecedent to the *oral* or *declaratory* struck so irresistibly upon the fancy of all who heard it (the pedagogue himself not excepted) that remission was unavoidable.

L. has given credit to B.'s great merits as an instructor. Coleridge, in his literary life, has pronounced a more intelligible and ample encomium on them. The author of the *Country Spectator* doubts not to compare him with the ablest teachers of antiquity. Perhaps we cannot dismiss him better than with the pious ejaculation of C.—when he heard that his old master was on his death-bed—"Poor

Rabidus furor. Madness of rage.

Forewarned. Forbidden; properly "forwarned."

The author, etc. Thomas Fanshaw Middleton, mentioned below; Coleridge's "patron and protector" at school.

J. B.!—may all his faults be forgiven; and may he be wafted to bliss by little cherub boys, all head and wings, with no *bottoms* to reproach his sublunary infirmities."

Under him were many good and sound scholars bred.—First Grecian of my time was Lancelot Pepys Stevens, kindest of boys and men, since Co-grammar-master (and inseparable companion) with Dr. T——e. What an edifying spectacle did this brace of friends present to those who remembered the anti-socialities of their predecessors!—You never met the one by chance in the street without a wonder, which was quickly dissipated by the almost immediate sub-appearance of the other. Generally arm in arm, these kindly coadjutors lightened for each other the toilsome duties of their profession, and when, in advanced age, one found it convenient to retire, the other was not long in discovering that it suited him to lay down the fasces also. Oh, it is pleasant, as it is rare, to find the same arm linked in yours at forty, which at thirteen helped it to turn over the *Cicero De Amicitia*, or some tale of Antique Friendship, which the young heart even then was burning to anticipate!—Co-Grecian with S. was Th——, who has since executed with ability various diplomatic functions at the Northern courts. Th—— was a tall, dark, saturnine youth, sparing of speech, with raven

Sublunary. On earth; literally, below the moon.
Grecian. The boys in the highest class were called Grecians.
Dr. T——e. Trollope, headmaster after Boyer.
Lay down the fasces. To resign office.
Cicero de Amicitia. Cicero's treatise *On Friendship.*

locks.—Thomas Fanshaw Middleton followed him (now Bishop of Calcutta) a scholar and a gentleman in his teens. He has the reputation of an excellent critic; and is author (besides the *Country Spectator*) of a Treatise on the Greek Article, against Sharpe.—M. is said to bear his mitre high in India, where the *regni novitas* (I dare say) sufficiently justifies the bearing. A humility quite as primitive as that of Jewel or Hooker might not be exactly fitted to impress the minds of those Anglo-Asiatic diocesans with a reverence for home institutions, and the church which those fathers watered. The manners of M. at school, though firm, were mild, and unassuming.—Next to M. (if not senior to him) was Richards, author of the *Aboriginal Britons*, the most spirited of the Oxford Prize Poems; a pale, studious Grecian.—Then followed poor S——, ill-fated M——! of these the Muse is silent.

Finding some of Edward's race
Unhappy, pass their annals by.

Come back into memory, like as thou wert in the dayspring of thy fancies, with hope like a fiery column before thee—the dark pillar not yet turned —Samuel Taylor Coleridge—Logician, Metaphy-

Regni novitas. Novelty of such rule.
Jewel or Hooker. Divines of the sixteenth century.
Diocesans. Members of a bishop's diocese.
Watered. I. Corinthians iii. 6.
Edward. Christ's Hospital was founded by Edward VI. 1552. From Prior's *Carmen Sæculare*, viii. (1700). "Edward's" is "Stuart's" in the original.
Fiery column. Exodus xiii. 21.

sician, Bard!—How have I seen the casual passer through the Cloisters stand still, entranced with admiration (while he weighed the disproportion between the *speech* and the *garb* of the young Mirandula), to hear thee unfold, in thy deep and sweet intonations, the mysteries of Jamblichus, or Plotinus (for even in those years thou waxedst not pale at such philosophic draughts), or reciting Homer in his Greek, or Pindar——while the walls of the old Grey Friars re-echoed to the accents of the *inspired charity-boy*! Many were the "wit-combats" (to dally awhile with the words of old Fuller) between him and C. V. Le G——, "which two I behold like a Spanish great galleon, and an English man-of-war; Master Coleridge, like the former, was built far higher in learning, solid, but slow in his performances. C. V. L., with the English man-of-war, lesser in bulk, but lighter in sailing, could turn with all tides, tack about, and take advantage of all winds, by the quickness of his wit and invention."

Nor shalt thou, their compeer, be quickly forgotten, Allen, with the cordial smile, and still more cordial laugh, with which thou wert wont to make the old Cloisters shake, in thy cognition of some more

Mirandula. A precocious wonder of the Italian Renaissance, scholar and mystic.

Jamblichus, Plotinus. Writers of the neo-Platonic, mystical philosophy.

Thou waxedst, etc. From Horace, *Epp.* i. 3. 10.

Fuller. The comparison in Fuller's *Worthies of England* is between Ben Jonson and Shakespeare, here transferred to Coleridge and Le Grice.

Cognition. Recognition, seeing the point.

poignant jest of theirs; or the anticipation of some more material, and, peradventure, practical one, of thine own. Extinct are those smiles, with that beautiful countenance, with which (for thou wert the *Nireus formosus* of the school), in the days of thy maturer waggery, thou didst disarm the wrath of infuriated town-damsel, who, incensed by provoking pinch, turning tigress-like round, suddenly converted by thy angel-look, exchanged the half-formed terrible "*bl*——," for a gentler greeting—"*bless thy handsome face!*"

Next follow two, who ought to be now alive, and the friends of Elia—the junior Le G—— and F——, who impelled, the former by a roving temper, the latter by too quick a sense of neglect—ill capable of enduring the slights poor Sizars are sometimes subject to in our seats of learning—exchanged their Alma Mater for the camp; perishing, one by climate, and one on the plains of Salamanca:—Le G—— sanguine, volatile, sweet-natured; F—— dogged, faithful, anticipative of insult, warm-hearted, with something of the old Roman height about him.

Fine, frank-hearted Fr——, the present master of

Nireus formosus. The handsome Nireus: mentioned by Homer as most beautiful of the Greeks who besieged Troy.

Le G——. Samuel le Grice, who "was as a brother to me," wrote Lamb, in his great affliction.

Sizars. Students allowed free board and lodging, for their poverty.

Alma Mater. University; literally, bountiful mother.

Height. High spirit.

Hertford, with Marmaduke T——, mildest of Missionaries—and both my good friends still—close the catalogue of Grecians in my time.

CHARLES LAMB.

XVIII.—DREAM-CHILDREN; A REVERIE

CHILDREN love to listen to stories about their elders, when *they* were children; to stretch their imagination to the conception of a traditionary great-uncle or grandame, whom they never saw. It was in this spirit that my little ones crept about me the other evening to hear about their great-grandmother Field, who lived in a great house in Norfolk (a hundred times bigger than that in which they and papa lived) which had been the scene—so at least it was generally believed in that part of the country—of the tragic incidents which they had lately become familiar with from the ballad of the *Children in the Wood*. Certain it is that the whole story of the children and their cruel uncle was to be seen fairly carved out in wood upon the chimney-piece of the great hall, the whole story down to the Robin Redbreasts, till a foolish rich person pulled it down to set up a marble one of modern invention in its stead, with no story upon it. Here Alice put out one of her dear mother's looks, too tender to be called upbraiding. Then I went on to say, how religious and

House in Norfolk. Blakesware, in Hertfordshire, is meant, where Lamb's grandmother, Mary Field, was housekeeper.

how good their great-grandmother Field was, how beloved and respected by every body, though she was not indeed the mistress of this great house, but had only the charge of it (and yet in some respects she might be said to be the mistress of it too) committed to her by the owner, who preferred living in a newer and more fashionable mansion which he had purchased somewhere in the adjoining county; but still she lived in it in a manner as if it had been her own, and kept up the dignity of the great house in a sort while she lived, which afterwards came to decay, and was nearly pulled down, and all its old ornaments stripped and carried away to the owner's other house, where they were set up, and looked as awkward as if some one were to carry away the old tombs they had seen lately at the Abbey, and stick them up in Lady C.'s tawdry gilt drawing-room. Here John smiled, as much as to say, "that would be foolish indeed." And then I told how, when she came to die, her funeral was attended by a concourse of all the poor, and some of the gentry too, of the neighbourhood for many miles round, to show their respect for her memory, because she had been such a good and religious woman; so good indeed that she knew all the Psaltery by heart, ay, and a great part of the Testament besides. Here little Alice spread her hands. Then I told what a tall, upright, graceful person their great-grandmother Field once was; and how in her youth she was esteemed the best dancer—

Abbey. Westminster Abbey; *cf.* XII.
Psaltery. For the usual "Psalter," the Book of Psalms.

here Alice's little right foot played an involuntary movement, till upon my looking grave, it desisted—the best dancer, I was saying, in the county, till a cruel disease, called a cancer, came, and bowed her down with pain; but it could never bend her good spirits, or make them stoop, but they were still upright, because she was so good and religious. Then I told how she was used to sleep by herself in a lone chamber of the great lone house; and how she believed that an apparition of two infants was to be seen at midnight gliding up and down the great staircase near where she slept, but she said "those innocents would do her no harm"; and how frightened I used to be, though in those days I had my maid to sleep with me, because I was never half so good or religious as she—and yet I never saw the infants. Here John expanded all his eyebrows and tried to look courageous. Then I told how good she was to all her grand-children, having us to the great house in the holydays, where I in particular used to spend many hours by myself, in gazing upon the old busts of the Twelve Cæsars, that had been Emperors of Rome, till the old marble heads would seem to live again, or I to be turned into marble with them; how I never could be tired with roaming about that huge mansion, with its vast empty rooms, with their worn-out hangings, fluttering tapestry, and carved oaken panels, with the gilding almost rubbed out—sometimes in the spacious old-fashioned gardens,

Holydays. Lamb keeps the old spelling; all holidays were originally Saints' Days, or Church festivals.

which I had almost to myself, unless when now and then a solitary gardening man would cross me—and how the nectarines and peaches hung upon the walls, without my ever offering to pluck them, because they were forbidden fruit, unless now and then,—and because I had more pleasure in strolling about among the old melancholy-looking yew trees, or the firs, and picking up the red berries, and the fir apples, which were good for nothing but to look at—or in lying about upon the fresh grass, with all the fine garden smells around me—or basking in the orangery, till I could almost fancy myself ripening too along with the oranges and the limes in that grateful warmth—or in watching the dace that darted to and fro in the fish-pond, at the bottom of the garden, with here and there a great sulky pike hanging midway down the water in silent state, as if it mocked at their impertinent friskings,—I had more pleasure in these busy-idle diversions than in all the sweet flavours of peaches, nectarines, oranges, and such-like common baits of children. Here John slily deposited back upon the plate a bunch of grapes, which, not unobserved by Alice, he had meditated dividing with her, and both seemed willing to relinquish them for the present as irrelevant. Then in somewhat a more heightened tone, I told how, though their great-grandmother Field loved all her grandchildren, yet in an especial manner she might be said to love their uncle, John L——, because he was so handsome and spirited a youth, and a king to the

John L——. Lamb's brother.

quarrelled sometimes), rather than not have him again, and was as uneasy without him, as he their poor uncle must have been when the doctor took off his limb. Here the children fell a crying, and asked if their little mourning which they had on was not for uncle John, and they looked up, and prayed me not to go on about their uncle, but to tell them some stories about their pretty dead mother. Then I told how for seven long years, in hope sometimes, sometimes in despair, yet persisting ever, I courted the fair Alice W——n; and, as much as children could understand, I explained to them what coyness, and difficulty, and denial, meant in maidens—when suddenly, turning to Alice, the soul of the first Alice looked out at her eyes with such a reality of re-presentment, that I became in doubt which of them stood there before me, or whose that bright hair was; and while I stood gazing, both the children gradually grew fainter to my view, receding, and still receding, till nothing at last but two mournful features were seen in the uttermost distance, which, without speech, strangely impressed upon me the effects of speech; "We are not of Alice, nor of thee, nor are we children at all. The children of Alice call Bartrum father. We are nothing; less than nothing, and dreams. We are only what might have been, and must wait upon the tedious shores of Lethe millions of ages before we have existence, and a name"—and immediately awaking, I found myself quietly seated in my bachelor armchair, where I

Lethe. The river of oblivion, in the Greek lower world.

had fallen asleep, with the faithful Bridget unchanged by my side—but John L. (or James Elia) was gone for ever.

CHARLES LAMB.

XIX.—OLD CHINA

I HAVE an almost feminine partiality for old china. When I go to see any great house, I enquire for the china-closet, and next for the picture gallery. I cannot defend the order of precedence, but by saying, that we have all some taste or other, of too ancient a date to admit of our remembering distinctly that it was an acquired one. I can call to mind the first play, and the first exhibition, that I was taken to; but I am not conscious of a time when china jars and saucers were introduced into my imagination.

I had no repugnance then—why should I now have?—to those little, lawless, azure-tinctured grotesques, that under the notion of men and women, float about, uncircumscribed by any element, in that world before perspective—a china tea-cup.

I like to see my old friends—whom distance cannot diminish—figuring up in the air (so they appear to our optics), yet on *terra firma* still—for we must in

Bridget. Stands for Mary Lamb.

Uncircumscribed, etc. You cannot tell whether they are on earth or in air or water.

Perspective. The art of representing depth, distance from the eye, by lines on a flat surface; *e.g.*, distant objects are drawn smaller. See De Quincey's remarks on p. 152.

Terra firma. Solid earth.

courtesy interpret that speck of deeper blue,—which the decorous artist, to prevent absurdity, had made to spring up beneath their sandals.

I love the men with women's faces, and the women, if possible, with still more womanish expressions.

Here is a young and courtly Mandarin, handing tea to a lady from a salver—two miles off. See how distance seems to set off respect! And here the same lady, or another—for likeness is identity on tea-cups —is stepping into a little fairy boat, moored on the hither side of this calm garden river, with a dainty mincing foot, which in a right angle of incidence (as angles go in our world) must infallibly land her in the midst of a flowery mead—a furlong off on the other side of the same strange stream!

Farther on—if far or near can be predicated of their world—see horses, trees, pagodas, dancing the hays.

Here—a cow and rabbit couchant, and co-extensive —so objects show, seen through the lucid atmosphere of fine Cathay.

I was pointing out to my cousin last evening, over our Hyson (which we are old-fashioned enough to drink unmixed still of an afternoon), some of these *speciosa miracula* upon a set of extraordinary old

Predicated. Asserted.
Hays. An old-fashioned country-dance.
Couchant, etc. Lying down, and of the same size; from the language of heraldry.
Cathay. China.
Hyson. A sort of green tea from China.
Speciosa miracula. Plausible wonders—from Horace.

blue china (a recent purchase) which we were now for the first time using; and could not help remarking, how favourable circumstances had been to us of late years, that we could afford to please the eye sometimes with trifles of this sort—when a passing sentiment seemed to overshade the brows of my companion. I am quick at detecting these summer clouds in Bridget.

"I wish the good old times would come again," she said, "when we were not quite so rich. I do not mean, that I want to be poor; but there was a middle state"—so she was pleased to ramble on,—"in which I am sure we were a great deal happier. A purchase is but a purchase, now that you have money enough and to spare. Formerly it used to be a triumph. When we coveted a cheap luxury (and O! how much ado I had to get you to consent in those times!)—we were used to have a debate two or three days before, and to weigh the *for* and *against*, and think what we might spare it out of, and what saving we could hit upon, that should be an equivalent. A thing was worth buying then, when we felt the money that we paid for it.

"Do you remember the brown suit, which you made to hang upon you, till all your friends cried shame upon you, it grew so thread-bare—and all because of that folio Beaumont and Fletcher, which you dragged home late at night from Barker's in Covent Garden? Do you remember how we eyed it for weeks before we could make up our minds to the

Beaumont and Fletcher. See p. 143.

purchase, and had not come to a determination till it was near ten o'clock of the Saturday night, when you set off from Islington, fearing you should be too late—and when the old bookseller with some grumbling opened his shop, and by the twinkling taper (for he was setting bedwards) lighted out the relic from his dusty treasures—and when you lugged it home, wishing it were twice as cumbersome—and when you presented it to me—and when we were exploring the perfectness of it (*collating* you called it)—and while I was repairing some of the loose leaves with paste, which your impatience would not suffer to be left till daybreak—was there no pleasure in being a poor man? or can those neat black clothes which you wear now, and are so careful to keep brushed, since we have become rich and finical, give you half the honest vanity, with which you flaunted it about in that overworn suit—your old corbeau—for four or five weeks longer than you should have done, to pacify your conscience for the mighty sum of fifteen—or sixteen shillings was it?—a great affair we thought it then—which you had lavished on the old folio. Now you can afford to buy any book that pleases you, but I do not see that you ever bring me home any nice old purchases now.

" When you came home with twenty apologies for laying out a less number of shillings upon that print

Finical. Over-particular.

Corbeau. Dark green verging on black; French for "raven."

Nice. Notice the modern use of the word.

after Lionardo, which we christened the 'Lady Blanch'; when you looked at the purchase, and thought of the money—and thought of the money, and looked again at the picture—was there no pleasure in being a poor man? Now, you have nothing to do but to walk into Colnaghi's, and buy a wilderness of Lionardos. Yet do you?

"Then, do you remember our pleasant walks to Enfield, and Potter's Bar, and Waltham, when we had a holyday—holydays, and all other fun, are gone, now we are rich—and the little hand-basket in which I used to deposit our day's fare of savoury cold lamb and salad—and how you would pry about at noontide for some decent house, where we might go in, and produce our store—only paying for the ale that you must call for—and speculate upon the looks of the landlady, and whether she was likely to allow us a table-cloth—and wish for such another honest hostess, as Izaak Walton has described many a one on the pleasant banks of the Lea, when he went a fishing—and sometimes they would prove obliging enough, and sometimes they would look grudgingly upon us—but we had cheerful looks still for one another, and would eat our plain food savorily, scarcely grudging Piscator his Trout Hall? Now,—when we go out a day's pleasuring, which is seldom

Lionardo. Leonardo da Vinci, artist and universal genius of the Italian Renaissance.

Wilderness. See *Merchant of Venice,* III. i.: "a wilderness of monkeys."

Izaak Walton. Author of *The Compleat Angler,* in which Piscator (fisherman) is the chief character.

moreover, we *ride* part of the way—and go into a fine inn, and order the best of dinners, never debating the expense—which, after all, never has half the relish of those chance country snaps, when we were at the mercy of uncertain usage, and a precarious welcome.

"You are too proud to see a play anywhere now but in the pit. Do you remember where it was we used to sit, when we saw the *Battle of Hexham*, and the *Surrender of Calais*, and Bannister and Mrs. Bland in the *Children in the Wood*—when we squeezed out our shillings a-piece to sit three or four times in a season in the one-shilling gallery—where you felt all the time that you ought not to have brought me—and more strongly I felt obligation to you for having brought me—and the pleasure was the better for a little shame—and when the curtain drew up, what cared we for our place in the house, or what mattered it where we were sitting, when our thoughts were with Rosalind in Arden, or with Viola at the Court of Illyria? You used to say, that the Gallery was the best place of all for enjoying a play socially—that the relish of such exhibitions must be in proportion to the infrequency of going—that the company we met there, not being in general readers of plays, were obliged to attend the more, and did attend, to what was going on, on the stage—because

Pit. There were no stalls in those days.

Battle of Hexham, etc. Two plays by George Colman the younger (1789, 1791).

Children in the Wood. By Morton (1815).

Rosalind in Arden. See *As You Like It.*

Court of Illyria. See *Twelfth Night.*

sense of the word. It may give them a hint how to make much of others. But now—what I mean by the word—we never do make much of ourselves. None but the poor can do it. I do not mean the veriest poor of all, but persons as we were, just above poverty.

"I know what you were going to say, that it is mighty pleasant at the end of the year to make all meet,—and much ado we used to have every Thirty-first Night of December to account for our exceedings—many a long face did you make over your puzzled accounts, and in contriving to make it out how we had spent so much—or that we had not spent so much—or that it was impossible we should spend so much next year—and still we found our slender capital decreasing—but then, betwixt ways, and projects, and compromises of one sort or another, and talk of curtailing this charge, and doing without that for the future—and the hope that youth brings, and laughing spirits (in which you were never poor till now) we pocketed up our loss, and in conclusion, with 'lusty brimmers' (as you used to quote it out of *hearty cheerful Mr. Cotton*, as you called him), we used to welcome in the 'coming guest.' Now we have no reckoning at all at the end of the old year—no flattering promises about the new year doing better for us."

Mr. Cotton. He wrote a supplement to Walton's *Compleat Angler*; his lines are:

> "Then let us welcome the New Guest [*i.e.*, the New Year]
> With lusty brimmers of the best."

sitting on this luxurious sofa—be once more struggling up those inconvenient stair cases, pushed about, and squeezed, and elbowed by the poorest rabble of poor gallery scramblers—could I once more hear those anxious shrieks of yours—and the delicious *Thank God, we are safe*, which always followed when the topmost stair, conquered, let in the first light of the whole cheerful theatre down beneath us—I know not the fathom line that ever touched a descent so deep as I would be willing to bury more wealth in than Crœsus had, or the great Jew R—— is supposed to have, to purchase it. And now do just look at that merry little Chinese waiter holding an umbrella, big enough for a bed-tester, over the head of that pretty insipid half Madonna-ish chit of a lady in that very blue summer-house.

CHARLES LAMB.

XX.—POPULAR FALLACIES

I

THAT ENOUGH IS AS GOOD AS A FEAST

NOT a man, woman, or child in ten miles round Guildford, who really believes this saying. The inventor of it did not believe it himself. It was made in revenge by somebody who was disappointed of a

Crœsus. An ancient king of Lydia.
R——. Rothschild.
Bed-tester. Canopy over a bed.
Madonna-ish. Like the Virgin Mary in an Italian picture.

regale. It is a vile cold-scrag-of-mutton sophism; a lie palmed upon the palate, which knows better things. If nothing else could be said for a feast, this is sufficient, that from the superflux there is usually something left for the next day. Morally interpreted, it belongs to a class of proverbs, which have a tendency to make us undervalue *money*. Of this cast are those notable observations, that money is not health; riches cannot purchase every thing; the metaphor which makes gold to be mere muck, with the morality which traces fine clothing to the sheep's back, and denounces pearl as the unhandsome excretion of an oyster. Hence, too, the phrase which imputes dirt to acres—a sophistry so bare-faced, that even the literal sense of it is true only in a wet season. This, and abundance of similar sage saws assuming to inculcate *content*, we verily believe to have been the invention of some cunning borrower, who had designs upon the purse of his wealthier neighbour, which he could only hope to carry by force of these verbal jugglings. Translate any one of these sayings out of the artful metonymy which envelopes it, and the trick is apparent. Goodly legs and shoulders of mutton, exhilarating cordials, books, pictures, the opportunities of seeing foreign countries, independence, heart's ease, a man's own time to himself,

Regale. See p. 85.
Sophism. A plausible but false statement.
The phrase, etc. See *Hamlet*, V. ii. 90: "He hath much land . . . as I say, spacious in the possession of dirt."
Metonymy. The figure of speech which substitutes for a noun some other noun connected in meaning.

are not *much*—however we may be pleased to scandalize with that appellation the faithful metal that provides them for us.

II

THAT A BULLY IS ALWAYS A COWARD

THIS axiom contains a principle of compensation, which disposes us to admit the truth of it. But there is no safe trusting to dictionaries and definitions. We should more willingly fall in with this popular language, if we did not find *brutality* sometimes awkwardly coupled with *valour* in the same vocabulary. The comic writers, with their poetical justice, have contributed not a little to mislead us upon this point. To see a hectoring fellow exposed and beaten upon the stage, has something in it wonderfully diverting. Some people's share of animal spirits is notoriously low and defective. It has not strength to raise a vapour, or furnish out the wind of a tolerable bluster. These love to be told that huffing is no part of valour. The truest courage with them is that which is the least noisy and obtrusive. But confront one of these silent heroes with the swaggerer of real life, and his confidence in the theory quickly vanishes. Pretensions

Scandalize. Slander.

Poetical justice. Their practice of never allowing bad character to triumph in the end.

Huffing. Swagger.

III

THAT WE SHOULD RISE WITH THE LARK

At what precise minute that little airy musician doffs his night gear, and prepares to tune up his unseasonable matins, we are not naturalist enough to determine. But for a mere human gentleman —that has no orchestra business to call him from his warm bed to such preposterous exercises—we take ten, or half after ten (eleven, of course, during this Christmas solstice), to be the very earliest hour, at which he can begin to think of abandoning his pillow. To think of it, we say; for to do it in earnest, requires another half-hour's good consideration. Not but there are pretty sun-risings, as we are told, and such like gawds, abroad in the world, in summer time especially, some hours before what we have assigned; which a gentleman may see, as they say, only for getting up. But, having been tempted, once or twice, in earlier life, to assist at those ceremonies, we confess our curiosity abated. We are no longer ambitious of being the sun's courtiers, to attend at his morning levées. We hold the good hours of the dawn too sacred to waste them upon such observances; which have in them, besides, something Pagan and Persic. To say truth, we never anticipated our usual hour, or got up with the sun (as 'tis called), to go a journey, or upon a foolish whole day's pleasuring, but we suffered for it all the long hours

Persic. The Persians worshipped the sun.

after in listlessness and headaches; Nature herself sufficiently declaring her sense of our presumption in aspiring to regulate our frail waking courses by the measures of that celestial and sleepless traveller. We deny not that there is something sprightly and vigorous, at the outset especially, in these break-of-day excursions. It is flattering to get the start of a lazy world; to conquer Death by proxy in his image. But the seeds of sleep and mortality are in us; and we pay usually in strange qualms before night falls, the penalty of the unnatural inversion. Therefore, while the busy part of mankind are fast huddling on their clothes, are already up and about their occupations, content to have swallowed their sleep by wholesale; we choose to linger a-bed, and digest our dreams. It is the very time to recombine the wandering images, which night in a confused mass presented; to snatch them from forgetfulness; to shape, and mould them. Some people have no good of their dreams. Like fast feeders, they gulp them too grossly, to taste them curiously. We love to chew the cud of a foregone vision; to collect the scattered rays of a brighter phantasm, or act over again, with firmer nerves, the sadder nocturnal tragedies; to drag into daylight a struggling and half-vanishing night-mare; to handle and examine the terrors, or the airy solaces. We have too much

Lazy world. See *Julius Cæsar*, I. ii. 130:

> So get the start of the majestic world
> And bear the palm alone.

Digest. Arrange. *Curiously.* Carefully.

respect for these spiritual communications, to let them go so lightly. We are not so stupid, or so careless, as that Imperial forgetter of his dreams, that we should need a seer to remind us of the form of them. They seem to us to have as much significance as our waking concerns; or rather to import us more nearly, as more nearly we approach by years to the shadowy world, whither we are hastening. We have shaken hands with the world's business; we have done with it; we have discharged ourself of it. Why should we get up? we have neither suit to solicit, nor affairs to manage. The drama has shut in upon us at the fourth act. We have nothing here to expect, but in a short time a sick bed, and a dismissal. We delight to anticipate death by such shadows as night affords. We are already half acquainted with ghosts. We were never much in the world. Disappointment early struck a dark veil between us and its dazzling illusions. Our spirits showed grey before our hairs. The mighty changes of the world already appear as but the vain stuff out of which dramas are composed. We have asked no more of life than what the mimic images in play-houses present us with. Even those types have waxed fainter. Our clock appears to have struck. We are SUPERANNUATED. In this dearth of mundane satisfaction, we contract politic alliances with shadows. It is good to have friends at court.

Forgetter of his dreams. Nebuchadnezzar, who proposed to cut his Chaldeans in pieces if they could not remind him of his dream. Daniel ii. 5.

Import. Concern.

have been much fitter, no less from the temerity than the felicity of his pen—

> Never so sure our rapture to create
> As when it touch'd the brink of all we hate.

Compared with him I shall, I fear, make but a commonplace piece of business of it; but I should be loth the idea was entirely lost, and besides I may avail myself of some hints of his in the progress of it. I am sometimes, I suspect, a better reporter of the ideas of other people than expounder of my own. I pursue the one too far into paradox or mysticism; the others I am not bound to follow farther than I like, or than seems fair and reasonable.

On the question being started, A—— said, "I suppose the two first persons you would choose to see would be the two greatest names in English literature, Sir Isaac Newton and Mr. Locke?" In this A——, as usual, reckoned without his host. Every one burst out a laughing at the expression of B——'s face, in which impatience was restrained by courtesy. "Yes, the greatest names," he stammered out hastily, "but they were not persons—not persons."—"Not persons?" said A——, looking wise and foolish at the same time, afraid his triumph might be premature. "That is," rejoined B——, "not characters, you know. By Mr. Locke and Sir Isaac Newton, you mean the *Essay on the Human Understanding*, and the *Principia*, which we have

Never so sure, etc. Altered from Pope, *Moral Essays*, ii. 51.
Principia. In which Newton expounded the laws of motion and the principle of gravitation.

to this day. Beyond their contents there is nothing personally interesting in the men. But what we want to see anyone *bodily* for, is when there is something peculiar, striking in the individuals, more than we can learn from their writings, and yet are curious to know. I dare say Locke and Newton were very like Kneller's portraits of them. But who could paint Shakespeare?"—"Ay," retorted A——, "there it is; then I suppose you would prefer seeing him and Milton instead?"—"No," said B——, "neither. I have seen so much of Shakespeare on the stage and on bookstalls, in frontispieces and on mantle-pieces, that I am quite tired of the everlasting repetition: and as to Milton's face, the impressions that have come down to us of it I do not like; it is too starched and puritanical; and I should be afraid of losing some of the manna of his poetry in the leaven of his countenance and the precisian's band and gown."—"I shall guess no more," said A——. "Who is it, then, you would like to see 'in his habit as he lived,' if you had your choice of the whole range of English literature?" B—— then named Sir Thomas Browne and Fulke Greville, the friend of Sir Philip Sidney, as the two worthies whom he should feel the greatest pleasure to encounter on the floor of his apartment in their nightgown and slippers, and to exchange friendly greeting with them. At this A——

Precisian's band. Puritan's collar.
In his habit, etc. See *Hamlet*, III. iv. 135.
Sir Thomas Browne. 1605–82; wrote *Religio Medici, Urn Burial*, etc.
Fulke Greville. 1554–1628; Lord Brooke.

laughed outright, and conceived B—— was jesting with him; but as no one followed his example, he thought there might be something in it, and waited for an explanation in a state of whimsical suspense. B—— then (as well as I can remember a conversation that passed twenty years ago—how time slips!) went on as follows: "The reason why I pitch upon these two authors is, that their writings are riddles, and they themselves the most mysterious of personages. They resemble the soothsayers of old, who dealt in dark hints and doubtful oracles; and I should like to ask them the meaning of what no mortal but themselves, I should suppose, can fathom. There is Dr. Johnson, I have no curiosity, no strange uncertainty about him: he and Boswell together have pretty well let me into the secret of what passed through his mind. He and other writers like him are sufficiently explicit: my friends, whose repose I should be tempted to disturb (were it in my power), are implicit, inextricable, inscrutable.

> And call up him who left half-told
> The story of Cambuscan bold.

"When I look at that obscure but gorgeous prose-composition (the *Urn-burial*) I seem to myself to look into a deep abyss, at the bottom of which are hid pearls and rich treasure; or it is like a stately labyrinth of doubt and withering speculation, and I would invoke the spirit of the author to lead me through it. Besides, who would not be curious to

And call up him, etc. Milton, *Il Penseroso*, 109; "him" is Chaucer. *Urn-burial.* By Sir Thomas Browne.

see the lineaments of a man who, having himself been twice married, wished that mankind were propagated like trees! As to Fulke Greville, he is like nothing but one of his own 'Prologues spoken by the ghost of an old king of Ormus,' a truly formidable and inviting personage: his style is apocalyptical, cabalistical, a knot worthy of such an apparition to untie; and for the unravelling a passage or two, I would stand the brunt of an encounter with so portentous a commentator!"—"I am afraid in that case," said A——, "that if the mystery were once cleared up, the merit might be lost;"—and turning to me, whispered a friendly apprehension, that while B—— continued to admire these old crabbed authors, he would never become a popular writer. Dr. Donne was mentioned as a writer of the same period, with a very interesting countenance, whose history was singular, and whose meaning was often quite as *uncomeatable*, without a personal citation from the dead, as that of any of his contemporaries. The volume was produced; and while some one was expatiating on the exquisite simplicity and beauty of the portrait prefixed to the old edition, A—— got hold of the poetry, and exclaiming "What have we here?" read the following:

> "Here lies a She-Sun and a He-Moon there,
> She gives the best light to his sphere,
> Or each is both and all, and so
> They unto one another nothing owe."

Apocalyptical. Like the Apocalypse, the Book of Revelation.
Cabalistical. Like the Cabala, a Jewish mystical wor[illegible]
Dr. Donne. 1573–1631; Dean of St. Paul's.

There was no resisting this, till B——, seizing the volume, turned to the beautiful *Lines to his Mistress*, dissuading her from accompanying him abroad, and read them with suffused features and a faltering tongue.

" By our first strange and fatal interview,
By all desires which thereof did ensue,
By our long starving hopes, by that remorse
Which my words' masculine persuasive force
Begot in thee, and by the memory
Of hurts, which spies and rivals threaten'd me,
I calmly beg. But by thy father's wrath,
By all pains which want and divorcement hath,
I conjure thee; and all the oaths which I
And thou have sworn to seal joint constancy
Here I unswear, and overswear them thus,
Thou shalt not love by ways so dangerous.
Temper, oh fair Love! love's impetuous rage,
Be my true mistress still, not my feign'd Page;
I'll go, and, by thy kind leave, leave behind
Thee, only worthy to nurse in my mind
Thirst to come back; oh, if thou die before,
My soul from other lands to thee shall soar.
Thy (else Almighty) beauty cannot move
Rage from the seas, nor thy love teach them love,
Nor tame wild Boreas' harshness; thou hast read
How roughly he in pieces shivered
Fair Orithea, whom he swore he lov'd.
Fall ill or good, 'tis madness to have prov'd
Dangers unurg'd: Feed on this flattery,
That absent lovers one with th' other be.
Dissemble nothing, not a boy; nor change
Thy body's habit, nor mind; be not strange
To thyself only. All will spy in thy face
A blushing, womanly, discovering grace.
Richly cloth'd apes are called apes, and as soon
Eclips'd as bright we call the moon the moon.

Boreas. The north wind. *Prov'd.* Experienced.
Dissemble. Pretend to be. *Discovering.* Revealing.
As soon. As unhesitatingly.

> Men of France, changeable chameleons,
> Spittles of diseases, shops of fashions,
> Love's fuellers, and the rightest company
> Of players, which upon the world's stage be,
> Will quickly know thee. . . . O stay here! for thee
> England is only a worthy gallery,
> To walk in expectation; till from thence
> Our greatest King call thee to his presence.
> When I am gone, dream me some happiness,
> Nor let thy looks our long hid love confess,
> Nor praise, nor dispraise me; nor bless, nor curse
> Openly love's force, nor in bed fright thy nurse
> With midnight startings, crying out, Oh, oh,
> Nurse, oh, my love is slain, I saw him go,
> O'er the white Alps alone; I saw him, I,
> Assail'd, fight, taken, stabb'd, bleed, fall, and die.
> Augur me better chance, except dread Jove
> Think it enough for me to have had thy love."

Some one then inquired of B—— if we could not see from the window the Temple Walk in which Chaucer used to take his exercise; and on his name being put to the vote, I was pleased to find that there was a general sensation in his favour in all but A——, who said something about the ruggedness of the metre, and even objected to the quaintness of the orthography. I was vexed at this superficial gloss, pertinaciously reducing everything to its own trite level, and asked "if he did not think it would be worth while to scan the eye that had first greeted the Muse in that dim twilight and early dawn of English literature; to see the head, round which the visions of fancy must have played like gleams of inspiration or a sudden glory; to watch those lips

Spittles. Hospitals.
Gloss. Comment.
Chaucer. 1328–1400.
Trite. Everyday, hackneyed.

that "lisped in numbers, for the numbers came" —as by a miracle, or as if the dumb should speak? Nor was it alone that he had been the first to tune his native tongue (however imperfectly to modern ears); but he was himself a noble, manly character, standing before his age and striving to advance it; a pleasant humourist withal, who has not only handed down to us the living manners of his time, but had, no doubt, store of curious and quaint devices, and would make as hearty a companion as Mine Host of the Tabard. His interview with Petrarch is fraught with interest. Yet I would rather have seen Chaucer in company with the author of the *Decameron*, and have heard them exchange their best stories together, the *Squire's Tale* against the *Story of the Falcon*, the *Wife of Bath's Prologue* against the *Adventures of Friar Albert*. How fine to see the high mysterious brow which learning then wore, relieved by the gay, familiar tone of men of the world, and by the courtesies of genius. Surely, the thoughts and feelings which passed through the minds of these great revivers of learning, these Cadmuses who sowed the teeth of letters, must have

Lisped in numbers, etc. Pope, *Epistle to Arbuthnot*, 128. *Numbers*. Metre, poetry.

Tabard. The Inn at which Chaucer's Pilgrims met to start for Canterbury.

Petrarch. Italian poet and scholar; 1304–74. It is not known that Chaucer ever met him.

Author of the Decameron. Boccaccio; 1313–75.

Cadmuses. In the Greek story, Cadmus sowed the teeth of a dragon, from which sprang armed men; he also introduced the alphabet.

stamped an expression on their features, as different from the moderns as their books, and well worth the perusal. Dante," I continued, "is as interesting a person as his own Ugolino, one whose lineaments curiosity would as eagerly devour in order to penetrate his spirit, and the only one of the Italian poets I should care much to see. There is a fine portrait of Ariosto by no less a hand than Titian's; light, Moorish, spirited, but not answering our idea. The same artist's large colossal profile of Peter Aretine is the only likeness of the kind that has the effect of conversing with "the mighty dead," and this is truly spectral, ghastly, necromantic." B—— put it to me if I should like to see Spenser as well as Chaucer; and I answered without hesitation, "No; for that his beauties were ideal, visionary, not palpable or personal, and therefore connected with less curiosity about the man. His poetry was the essence of romance, a very halo round the bright orb of fancy; and the bringing in the individual might dissolve the charm. No tones of voice could come up to the mellifluous cadence of his verse; no form but of a winged angel could vie with the airy shapes he has described. He was (to our apprehensions) rather 'a creature of the element, that lived in the rainbow

Dante. 1265–1321; wrote *Inferno*, etc., a journey through Hell, Purgatory and Paradise.
Ariosto. 1474–1534; author of *Orlando Furioso.*
Peter Aretine. A satirist of the Italian Renaissance.
Spenser. 1552–99; author of *The Fairy Queen.*

and played in the plighted clouds,' than an ordinary mortal. Or if he did appear, I should wish it to be as a mere vision, like one of his own pageants, and that he should pass by unquestioned like a dream or sound—

> ——*That* was Arion crown'd:
> So went he playing on the wat'ry plain!"

Captain C. muttered something about Columbus, and M. C. hinted at the Wandering Jew; but the last was set aside, as spurious, and the first made over to the New World.

"I should like," said Miss D——, "to have seen Pope talking with Patty Blount, and I *have* seen Goldsmith." Everyone turned round to look at Miss D——, as if by so doing they too could get a sight of Goldsmith.

"Where," asked a harsh croaking voice, "was Dr. Johnson in the years 1745–46? He did not write anything that we know of, nor is there any account of him in Boswell during those two years. Was he in Scotland with the Pretender? He seems to have passed through the scenes in the Highlands in company with Boswell many years after 'with lack-lustre eye," yet as if they were familiar to him,

Plighted. Folded; the passage is altered from Milton's *Comus*, 299.

Arion. A Greek minstrel, rescued from drowning by a dolphin, on whose back he played his lyre. *Fairy Queen*, IV. xi. 23, 24.

Martha Blount was the life-long friend of Pope.

With lack-lustre eye. See *As You Like It*, II. vii. 21.

or associated in his mind with interests that he durst not explain. If so, it would be an additional reason for my liking him; and I would give something to have seen him seated in the tent with the youthful Majesty of Britain, and penning the Proclamation to all true subjects and adherents of the legitimate Government."

"I thought," said A——, turning short round upon B——, "that you of the Lake School did not like Pope?"—"Not like Pope! My dear sir, you must be under a mistake—I can read him over and over for ever!"—"Why certainly, the *Essay on Man* must be a masterpiece."—"It may be so, but I seldom look into it."—"Oh! then it's his *Satires* you admire?"—"No, not his *Satires*, but his friendly *Epistles* and his compliments."—"Compliments! I did not know he ever made any."—"The finest," said B——, "that were ever paid by the wit of man. Each of them is worth an estate for life—nay, is an immortality. There is that superb one to Lord Cornbury:

> Despise low joys, low gains;
> Disdain whatever Cornbury disdains;
> Be virtuous, and be happy for your pains.

"Was there ever more artful insinuation of idolatrous praise? And then that noble apotheosis of

Lake School. A popular, but misleading, name for Wordsworth, Coleridge, Southey and their followers, many of whom lived in the Lake district of Cumberland.

Despise low joys, etc. From *Imitations of Horace,* Epistle vi. 60–62.

Apotheosis. Deification, raising to the skies.

his friend Lord Mansfield (however little deserved), when, speaking of the House of Lords, he adds:

> Conspicuous scene! another yet is nigh,
> (More silent far) where kings and poets lie;
> Where Murray (long enough his country's pride)
> Shall be no more than Tully or than Hyde!

"And with what a fine turn of indignant flattery he addresses Lord Bolingbroke:

> Why rail they then, if but one wreath of mine,
> Oh! all accomplish'd St. John, deck thy shrine?

"Or turn," continued B——, with a slight hectic on his cheek and his eye glistening, "to his list of early friends:

> But why then publish? Granville the polite,
> And knowing Walsh, would tell me I could write:
> Well-natured Garth inflamed with early praise;
> And Congreve loved and Swift endured my lays:
> The courtly Talbot, Somers, Sheffield read,
> Ev'n mitred Rochester would nod the head;
> And St. John's self (great Dryden's friend before)
> Received with open arms one poet more.
> Happy my studies, if by these approved!
> Happier their author, if by these beloved!
> From these the world will judge of men and books,
> Not from the Burnets, Oldmixons and Cooks."

Here his voice totally failed him, and throwing down the book, he said, "Do you think I would not wish to have been friends with such a man as this?"

Conspicuous scene, etc. From *Imitations of Horace*, Epistle vi. 50–53.

Tully and Hyde. Cicero and Lord Clarendon.

Why rail they then, etc. From *Epilogue to the Satires*, ii. 138.

Hectic. Flush.

But why then publish, etc. From *Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot*, 135–46.

"What say you to Dryden?"—"He rather made a show of himself, and courted popularity in that lowest temple of Fame, a coffee-house, so as in some measure to vulgarise one's idea of him. Pope, on the contrary, reached the very *beau ideal* of what a poet's life should be; and his fame while living seemed to be an emanation from that which was to circle his name after death. He was so far enviable (and one would feel proud to have witnessed the rare spectacle in him) that he was almost the only poet and man of genius who met with his reward on this side of the tomb, who realised in friends, fortune, the esteem of the world, the most sanguine hopes of a youthful ambition, and who found that sort of patronage from the great during his lifetime which they would be thought anxious to bestow upon him after his death. Read Gay's verses to him on his supposed return from Greece, after his translation of Homer was finished, and say if you would not gladly join the bright procession that welcomed him home, or see it once more land at Whitehall Stairs."—"Still," said Miss D——, "I would rather have seen him talking with Patty Blount, or riding by in a coronet-coach with Lady Mary Wortley Montagu!"

E——, who was deep in a game of piquet at the other end of the room, whispered to M. C. to ask if Junius would not be a fit person to invoke from the

Coffee-house. Will's; see p. 82.

Junius. The anonymous author of the famous *Letters* (1769–72), political satires of great power.

dead. "Yes," said B——, "provided he would agree to lay aside his mask."

We were now at a stand for a short time, when Fielding was mentioned as a candidate: only one, however, seconded the proposition. "Richardson?" —"By all means, but only to look at him through the glass-door of his back-shop, hard at work upon one of his novels (the most extraordinary contrast that ever was presented between an author and his works), but not to let him come behind his counter, lest he should want you to turn customer, nor to go upstairs with him, lest he should offer to read the first manuscript of *Sir Charles Grandison*, which was originally written in eight and twenty volumes octavo, or get out the letters of his female correspondents, to prove that *Joseph Andrews* was low."

There was but one statesman in the whole of English history that any one expressed the least desire to see—Oliver Cromwell, with his fine, frank, rough, pimply face, and wily policy;—and one enthusiast, John Bunyan, the immortal author of the *Pilgrim's Progress*. It seemed that if he came into the room, dreams would follow him, and that each person would nod under his golden cloud, "nigh-sphered in Heaven," a canopy as strange and stately as any in Homer.

Fielding. The great novelist; wrote *Tom Jones* (1750), and *Joseph Andrews*, a parody on *Pamela*, etc.

Richardson. The first English novelist; wrote *Pamela* (1740), *Clarissa Harlowe*, and *Sir Charles Grandison*; he was a bookseller.

Nigh-sphered in Heaven. Collins, *Ode on the Poetical Character*—a favourite of Hazlitt.

Of all persons near our own time, Garrick's name was received with the greatest enthusiasm, who was proposed by J. F——. He presently superseded both Hogarth and Handel, who had been talked of, but then it was on condition that he should act in tragedy and comedy, in the play and the farce, Lear and Wildair and Abel Drugger. What a *sight for sore eyes* that would be! Who would not part with a year's income at least, almost with a year of his natural life, to be present at it? Besides, as he could not act alone, and recitations are unsatisfactory things, what a troop he must bring with him—the silver-tongued Barry, and Quin, and Shuter and Weston, and Mrs. Clive and Mrs. Pritchard, of whom I have heard my father speak as so great a favourite when he was young! This would indeed be a revival of the dead, the restoring of art; and so much the more desirable, as such is the lurking scepticism mingled with our overstrained admiration of past excellence, that though we have the speeches of Burke, the portraits of Reynolds, the writings of Goldsmith, and the conversation of Johnson, to show what people could do at that period, and to confirm the universal testimony to the merits of Garrick; yet, as it was before our time, we have our misgivings, as if he was probably after all little better than a Bartlemy-fair actor, dressed out to play Macbeth in a scarlet coat and laced cocked-hat. For one, I should like to have seen and heard with my own eyes and ears. Certainly,

Wildair. In Farquhar's *Constant Couple.*
Abel Drugger. In Ben Jonson's *The Alchymist.*

by all accounts, if any one was ever moved by the true histrionic *æstus*, it was Garrick. When he followed the Ghost in *Hamlet*, he did not drop the sword, as most actors do, behind the scenes, but kept the point raised the whole way round, so fully was he possessed with the idea, or so anxious not to lose sight of his part for a moment. Once at a splendid dinner-party at Lord ——'s, they suddenly missed Garrick, and could not imagine what was become of him, till they were drawn to the window by the convulsive screams and peals of laughter of a young negro boy, who was rolling on the ground in an ecstasy of delight to see Garrick mimicking a turkey-cock in the court-yard, with his coat-tail stuck out behind, and in a seeming flutter of feathered rage and pride. Of our party only two persons present had seen the British Roscius; and they seemed as willing as the rest to renew their acquaintance with their old favourite.

We were interrupted in the hey-day and mid-career of this fanciful speculation, by a grumbler in a corner, who declared it was a shame to make all this rout about a mere player and farce-writer, to the neglect and exclusion of the fine old dramatists, the contemporaries and rivals of Shakespeare. B—— said he had anticipated this objection when he had named the author of *Mustapha* and *Alaham*;

Histrionic æstus. Actor's fire, passion.
Negro. Commonly employed as pages.
Roscius. A great Roman actor. *Shakespeare.* 1564–1616.
Author of Mustapha, etc. Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke; 1554–1628.

and out of caprice insisted upon keeping him to represent the set, in preference to the wild hair-brained enthusiast Kit Marlowe; to the sexton of St. Ann's, Webster, with his melancholy yew-trees and death's-heads; to Decker, who was but a garrulous proser; to the voluminous Heywood; and even to Beaumont and Fletcher, whom we might offend by complimenting the wrong author on their joint productions. Lord Brook, on the contrary, stood quite by himself, or in Cowley's words, was "a vast species alone." Some one hinted at the circumstance of his being a lord, which rather startled B——, but he said a *ghost* would perhaps dispense with strict etiquette, on being regularly addressed by his title. Ben Jonson divided our suffrages pretty equally. Some were afraid he would begin to traduce Shakespeare, who was not present to defend himself. "If he grows disagreeable," it was whispered aloud, "there is G—— can match him." At length, his romantic visit to Drummond of Hawthornden was mentioned, and turned the scale in his favour.

B—— inquired if there was any one that was hanged that I would choose to mention? And I

Kit Marlowe. 1564–93; wrote *Tamburlaine, Dr. Faustus*, etc.
Webster. Died about 1654; wrote *The Duchess of Malfi*, etc.
Decker. 1570–1637. *Heywood*. Died about 1641.
Beaumont. 1586–1616. *Fletcher*. 1576–1625.
A vast species alone. Said of the Greek poet Pindar.
Ben Jonson. 1573–1637. *Traduce*. Slander.
G——. William Godwin, author of *Political Justice*.
Drummond of Hawthornden. 1585–1649; his notes of Jonson's talk in 1619 survive.

answered, Eugene Aram. The name of the "Admirable Crichton" was suddenly started as a splendid example of *waste* talents, so different from the generality of his countrymen. This choice was mightily approved by a North-Briton present, who declared himself descended from that prodigy of learning and accomplishment, and said he had family-plate in his possession as vouchers for the fact, with the initials A. C.—*Admirable Crichton!* H—— laughed or rather roared as heartily at this as I should think he has done for many years.

The last-named Mitre-courtier then wished to know whether there were any metaphysicians to whom one might be tempted to apply the wizard spell? I replied, there were only six in modern times deserving the name—Hobbes, Berkeley, Butler, Hartley, Hume, Leibnitz; and perhaps Jonathan Edwards, a Massachusetts man.[1] As to the French,

[1] Lord Bacon is not included in this list, nor do I know where he should come in. It is not easy to make room for him and his reputation together. This great and celebrated man in some of his works recommends us to pour a bottle of claret into the ground of a morning, and to stand over it, inhaling the perfumes. So he sometimes enriched the dry and barren soil of speculation with the fine aromatic spirit of his genius. His *Essays* and his *Advancement of Learning* are works of vast depth and scope of observation. The last, though it contains no positive discoveries, is a noble chart of human intellect, and a guide to all future inquirers. [Hazlitt's note.]

Eugene Aram. A famous murderer, still remembered by Hood's poem; hanged in 1759.

Admirable Crichton. 1560- [?].

H——. Leigh Hunt.

Mitre-courtier. Lamb lived in Mitre Court, Fleet Street, for nine years.

who talked fluently of having *created* this science, there was not a tittle in any of their writings, that was not to be found literally in the authors I had mentioned. [Horne Tooke, who might have a claim to come in under the head of Grammar, was still living.] None of these names seemed to excite much interest, and I did not plead for the reappearance of those who might be thought best fitted by the abstracted nature of their studies for their present spiritual and disembodied state, and who, even while on this living stage, were nearly divested of common flesh and blood. As A—— with an uneasy fidgetty face was about to put some question about Mr. Locke and Dugald Stewart, he was prevented by M. C., who observed, "If J—— was here, he would undoubtedly be for having up those profound and redoubted scholiasts, Thomas Aquinas and Duns Scotus." I said this might be fair enough in him who had read or fancied he had read the original works, but I did not see how we could have any right to call up these authors to give an account of themselves in person, till we had looked into their writings.

By this time it should seem that some rumour of our whimsical deliberation had got wind, and had disturbed the *irritabile genus* in their shadowy abodes, for we received messages from several candidates

Horne Tooke. 1736–1812; an original and erratic writer on etymology.

Scholiasts. Here used for "scholastics, schoolmen": see p. 18.

Irritabile genus. Irritable race, *i.e.*, poets.

that we had just been thinking of. Gray declined our invitation, though he had not yet been asked: Gay offered to come and bring in his hand the Duchess of Bolton, the original Polly: Steele and Addison left their cards as Captain Sentry and Sir Roger de Coverley: Swift came in and sat down without speaking a word, and quitted the room as abruptly: Otway and Chatterton were seen lingering on the opposide side of the Styx, but could not muster enough between them to pay Charon his fare: Thomson fell asleep in the boat, and was rowed back again—and Burns sent a low fellow, one John Barleycorn, an old companion of his who had conducted him to the other world, to say that he had during his lifetime been drawn out of his retirement as a show, only to be made an exciseman of, and that he would rather remain where he was. He desired, however, to shake hands by his representative—the hand, thus held out, was in a burning fever, and shook prodigiously.

The room was hung round with several portraits of eminent painters. While we were debating whether we should demand speech with these masters of mute eloquence, whose features were so familiar to

Duchess of Bolton. As Lavinia Fenton, she played the heroine of Gay's *The Beggars' Opera.*

Otway and Chatterton. Both died of want, Otway aged 34, Chatterton by his own hand at 18.

Charon ferried the dead souls over the river Styx, on their way through the Greek lower world.

Thomson wrote *The Seasons*; his laziness was portentous.

John Barleycorn. I.e., whisky.

us, it seemed that all at once they glided from their frames, and seated themselves at some little distance from us. There was Leonardo with his majestic beard and watchful eye, having a bust of Archimedes before him; next him was Raphael's graceful head turned round to the Fornarina; and on his other side was Lucretia Borgia, with calm, golden locks; Michael Angelo had placed the model of St. Peter's on the table before him; Correggio had an angel at his side; Titian was seated with his Mistress between himself and Giorgione; Guido was accompanied by his own Aurora, who took a dice-box from him; Claude held a mirror in his hand; Rubens patted a beautiful panther (led in by a satyr) on the head; Vandyke appeared as his own Paris, and Rembrandt was hid under furs, gold chains and jewels, which Sir Joshua eyed closely, holding his hand so as to shade his forehead. Not a word was spoken; and as we rose to do them homage, they still presented the same surface to the view. Not being *bonâ-fide* representations of living people, we got rid of the splendid apparitions by signs and dumb show. As soon as they had melted into thin air, there was a loud noise at the outer door, and we found it was Giotto, Cimabue, and Ghirlandaio, who had been

Archimedes. Besides being a painter, etc., Leonardo was learned and inventive in mechanics, the principles of which had been taught by the old Greek Archimedes; see p. 115.

Sir Joshua. Reynolds.

Giotto, Cimabue, and Ghirlandaio. Some of the earliest Italian painters.

raised from the dead by their earnest desire to see their illustrious successors—

> Whose names on earth
> In Fame's eternal records live for aye!

Finding them gone, they had no ambition to be seen after them, and mournfully withdrew. "Egad!" said B——, "those are the very fellows I should like to have had some talk with, to know how they could see to paint when all was dark around them."

"But shall we have nothing to say," interrogated G. J——, "to the *Legend of Good Women?*"—"Name, name, Mr. J——," cried H—— in a boisterous tone of friendly exultation, "name as many as you please, without reserve or fear of molestation!" J—— was perplexed between so many amiable recollections, that the name of the lady of his choice expired in a pensive whiff of his pipe; and B—— impatiently declared for the Duchess of Newcastle. Mrs. Hutchinson was no sooner mentioned, than she carried the day from the Duchess. We were the less solicitous on this subject of filling up the posthumous lists of Good Women, as there was already one in the room as good, as sensible, and in all respects as exemplary, as the best of them could

When all was dark. I.e., in the Dark Ages.

Legend of Good Women. A poem by Chaucer; here "legend" looks like a pun, for "legion."

Duchess of Newcastle. 1652–73; wrote a life of her husband, and was a favourite writer with Lamb.

Mrs. Hutchinson. 1620–64; wrote famous Memoirs of her husband, Col. Hutchinson.

One in the room, etc. Mary Lamb.

be for their lives! "I should like vastly to have seen Ninon de l'Enclos," said that incomparable person; and this immediately put us in mind that we had neglected to pay honour due to our friends on the other side of the Channel: Voltaire, the patriarch of levity, and Rousseau, the father of sentiment, Montaigne and Rabelais (great in wisdom and in wit), Molière and that illustrious group that are collected round him (in the print of that subject) to hear him read his comedy of the *Tartuffe* at the house of Ninon; Racine, La Fontaine, Rochefoucault, St. Evremont, etc.

"There is one person," said a shrill, querulous voice, "I would rather see than all these—Don Quixote!"

"Come, come!" said H——; "I thought we should have no heroes, real or fabulous. What say you, Mr. B——? Are you for eking out your shadowy list with such names as Alexander, Julius Cæsar, Tamerlane, or Ghengis Khan?"—"Excuse me," said B——, "on the subject of characters in active life, plotters and disturbers of the world, I have a crochet of my own, which I beg leave to reserve."—"No, no! come, out with your worthies!"—"What do you think of Guy Faux and Judas Iscariot?" H—— turned an eye upon him like a wild Indian, but cordial and full of smothered glee. "Your most exquisite reason!" was echoed on all sides; and

Ninon de l'Enclos. A famous French beauty and wit; 1615–1706.

Your most exquisite reason. See *Twelfth Night*, II. iii.

A—— thought that B—— had now fairly entangled himself. "Why, I cannot but think," retorted he of the wistful countenance, "that Guy Faux, that poor fluttering annual scare-crow of straw and rags, is an ill-used gentleman. I would give something to see him sitting pale and emaciated, surrounded by his matches and his barrels of gunpowder, and expecting the moment that was to transport him to Paradise for his heroic self-devotion; but if I say any more, there is that fellow G—— will make something of it. And as to Judas Iscariot, my reason is different. I would fain see the face of him, who, having dipped his hand in the same dish with the Son of Man, could afterwards betray him. I have no conception of such a thing; nor have I ever seen any picture (not even Leonardo's very fine one) that gave me the least idea of it."—"You have said enough, Mr. B——, to justify your choice."

"Oh! ever right, Menenius,—ever right!"

"There is only one other person I can ever think of after this," continued H——; but without mentioning a name that once put on a semblance of mortality. "If Shakespeare was to come into the room, we should all rise up to meet him; but if that person was to come into it, we should all fall down and try to kiss the hem of his garment!"

As a lady present seemed now to get uneasy at the turn the conversation had taken, we rose up to go. The morning broke with that dim, dubious light by which Giotto, Cimabue, and Ghirlandaio

Oh! ever right, etc. See *Coriolanus*, II. i.

must have seen to paint their earliest works; and we parted to meet again and renew similar topics at night, the next night, and the night after that, till that night overspread Europe which saw no dawn. The same event, in truth, broke up our little Congress that broke up the great one. But that was to meet again: our deliberations have never been resumed.

WILLIAM HAZLITT (*New Monthly Magazine*, 1826).

XXII.—ON THE KNOCKING AT THE GATE IN "MACBETH"

FROM my boyish days I had always felt a great perplexity on one point in *Macbeth:* it was this: the knocking at the gate, which succeeds to the murder of Duncan, produced to my feelings an effect for which I never could account: the effect was—that it reflected back upon the murder a peculiar awfulness and a depth of solemnity: yet, however obstinately I endeavoured with my understanding to comprehend this, for many years I never could see *why* it should produce such an effect.——

Here I pause for one moment to exhort the reader never to pay any attention to his understanding when it stands in opposition to any other faculty

The great one. The Congress of Vienna, broken up by Napoleon's escape from Elba in 1815.

of his mind. The mere understanding, however useful and indispensable, is the meanest faculty in the human mind and the most to be distrusted: and yet the great majority of people trust to nothing else; which may do for ordinary life, but not for philosophic purposes. Of this, out of ten thousand instances that I might produce, I will cite one. Ask of any person whatsoever, who is not previously prepared for the demand by a knowledge of perspective, to draw in the rudest way the commonest appearance which depends upon the laws of that science—as for instance, to represent the effect of two walls standing at right angles to each other, or the appearance of the houses on each side of a street, as seen by a person looking down the street from one extremity. Now in all cases, unless the person has happened to observe in pictures how it is that artists produce these effects, he will be utterly unable to make the smallest approximation to it. Yet why?—For he has actually seen the effect every day of his life. The reason is—that he allows his understanding to overrule his eyes. His understanding, which includes no intuitive knowledge of the laws of vision, can furnish him with no reason why a line which is known and can be proved to be a horizontal line, should not *appear* a horizontal line: a line, that made any angle with the perpendicular less than a right angle, would seem to him to indicate that his houses were all tumbling down together. Accordingly he makes the line of his houses a hori-

Perspective. See p. 111.

zontal line, and fails of course to produce the effect demanded. Here then is one instance out of many, in which not only the understanding is allowed to overrule the eyes, but where the understanding is positively allowed to obliterate the eyes as it were: for not only does the man believe the evidence of his understanding in opposition to that of his eyes, but (which is monstrous!) the idiot is not aware that his eyes ever gave such evidence. He does not know that he has seen (and therefore *quoad* his consciousness has *not* seen) that which he *has* seen every day of his life. But to return from this digression,—my understanding could furnish no reason why the knocking at the gate in *Macbeth* should produce any effect direct or reflected: in fact, my understanding said positively that it could *not* produce any effect. But I knew better: I felt that it did: and I waited and clung to the problem until further knowledge should enable me to solve it.—At length, in 1812, Mr. Williams made his *début* on the stage of Ratcliffe Highway, and executed those unparalleled murders which have procured for him such a brilliant and undying reputation. On which murders, by the way, I must observe, that in one respect they have had an ill effect, by making the connoisseur in murder very fastidious in his taste, and dissatisfied with anything that has been since done in that line. All other murders look pale by the deep crimson of his: and

Quoad. As far as concerns.

Mr. Williams. See De Quincey's essay *On Murder Considered as One of the Fine Arts.*

as an amateur once said to me in a querulous tone, "There has been absolutely nothing *doing* since his time, or nothing that's worth speaking of." But this is wrong: for it is unreasonable to expect all men to be great artists, and born with the genius of Mr. Williams.—Now it will be remembered that in the first of these murders (that of the Marrs) the same incident (of a knocking at the door soon after the work of extermination was complete) did actually occur which the genius of Shakespeare had invented: and all good judges and the most eminent dilettanti acknowledged the felicity of Shakespeare's suggestion as soon as it was actually realised. Here then was a fresh proof that I had been right in relying on my own feeling in opposition to my understanding; and again I set myself to study the problem: at length I solved it to my own satisfaction; and my solution is this. Murder in ordinary cases, where the sympathy is wholly directed to the case of the murdered person, is an incident of coarse and vulgar horror; and for this reason—that it flings the interest exclusively upon the natural but ignoble instinct by which we cleave to life; an instinct which, as being indispensable to the primal law of self-preservation, is the same in kind (though different in degree) amongst all living creatures; this instinct therefore, because it annihilates all distinctions, and degrades the greatest of men to the level of "the poor beetle that we tread on," exhibits human nature in its most abject and humiliating attitude. Such an attitude

Dilettanti. Amateur lovers of the fine arts.

would little suit the purposes of the poet. What then must he do? He must throw the interest on the murderer: our sympathy must be with *him*; (of course I mean a sympathy of comprehension, a sympathy by which we enter into his feelings, and are made to understand them,—not a sympathy of pity or approbation:) in the murdered person all strife of thought, all flux and reflux of passion and of purpose, are crushed by one overwhelming panic: the fear of instant death smites him "with its petrific mace." But in the murderer, such a murderer as a poet will condescend to, there must be raging some great storm of passion,—jealousy, ambition, vengeance, hatred,—which will create a hell within him; and into this hell we are to look. In *Macbeth*, for the sake of gratifying his own enormous and teeming faculty of creation, Shakespeare has introduced two murderers: and, as usual in his hands, they are remarkably discriminated: but though in Macbeth the strife of mind is greater than in his wife, the tiger spirit not so awake, and his feelings caught chiefly by contagion from her,—yet,

Sympathy. It seems almost ludicrous to guard and explain my use of a word in a situation where it should naturally explain itself. But it has become necessary to do so, in consequence of the unscholarlike use of the word sympathy, at present so general, by which, instead of taking it in its proper use, as the act of reproducing in our minds the feelings of another, whether for hatred, indignation, love, pity, or approbation, it is made a mere synonym of the word *pity*; and hence, instead of saying, "sympathy *with* another," many writers adopt the monstrous barbarism of "sympathy *for* another." [De Quincey's note.]

With its petrific mace. Milton, *Paradise Lost*, x. 293

as both were finally involved in the guilt of murder, the murderous mind of necessity is finally to be presumed in both. This was to be expressed; and on its own account, as well as to make it a more proportionable antagonist to the unoffending nature of their victim, "the gracious Duncan," and adequately to expound "the deep damnation of his taking off," this was to be expressed with peculiar energy. We were to be made to feel that the human nature, *i.e.* the divine nature of love and mercy, spread through the hearts of all creatures, and seldom utterly withdrawn from man,—was gone, vanished, extinct; and that the fiendish nature had taken its place. And, as this effect is marvellously accomplished in the dialogues and soliloquies themselves, so it is finally consummated by the expedient under consideration; and it is to this that I now solicit the reader's attention. If the reader has ever witnessed a wife, daughter, or sister, in a fainting fit, he may chance to have observed that the most affecting moment in such a spectacle, is *that* in which a sigh and a stirring announce the recommencement of suspended life. Or, if the reader has ever been present in a vast metropolis on the day when some great national idol was carried in funeral pomp to his grave, and chancing to walk near to the course through which it passed, has felt powerfully in the silence and desertion of the streets and in the stagnation of ordinary business, the deep interest which at that moment was possessing the heart of man,—if all at once he should hear the death-like stillness

broken up by the sound of wheels rattling away from the scene, and making known that the transitory vision was dissolved, he will be aware that at no moment was his sense of the complete suspension and pause in ordinary human concerns so full and affecting as at that moment when the suspension ceases, and the goings-on of human life are suddenly resumed. All action in any direction is best expounded, measured, and made apprehensible, by reaction. Now apply this to the case in Macbeth. Here, as I have said, the retiring of the human heart and the entrance of the fiendish heart was to be expressed and made sensible. Another world has stepped in; and the murderers are taken out of the region of human things, human purposes, human desires. They are transfigured: Lady Macbeth is "unsexed"; Macbeth has forgot that he was born of woman; both are conformed to the image of devils; and the world of devils is suddenly revealed. But how shall this be conveyed and made palpable? In order that a new world may step in, this world must for a time disappear. The murderers, and the murder, must be insulated—cut off by an immeasurable gulph from the ordinary tide and succession of human affairs—locked up and sequestered in some deep recess: we must be made sensible that the world of ordinary life is suddenly arrested—laid asleep—tranced—racked into a dread armistice: time must be annihilated; relation to things without abolished; and all must pass self-withdrawn into a

Sensible. Obvious to our senses.

deep syncope and suspension of earthly passion. Hence it is that when the deed is done—when the work of darkness is perfect, then the world of darkness passes away like a pageantry in the clouds: the knocking at the gate is heard; and it makes known audibly that the reaction has commenced: the human has made its reflux upon the fiendish: the pulses of life are beginning to beat again: and the re-establishment of the goings-on of the world in which we live, first makes us profoundly sensible of the awful parenthesis that had suspended them.

Oh! mighty poet!—Thy works are not as those of other men, simply and merely great works of art; but are also like the phenomena of nature, like the sun and the sea, the stars and the flowers,—like frost and snow, rain and dew, hail-storm and thunder, which are to be studied with entire submission of our own faculties, and in the perfect faith that in them there can be no too much or too little, nothing useless or inert—but that, the further we press in our discoveries, the more we shall see proofs of design and self-supporting arrangement where the careless eye had seen nothing but accident!

N.B. In the above specimen of psychological criticism, I have purposely omitted to notice another use of the knocking at the gate, viz., the opposition and contrast which it produces in the porter's comments to the scenes immediately preceding; because this use is tolerably obvious to all who are accustomed to reflect on what they read.

DE QUINCEY.

Syncope. Swoon.

XXIII.—GETTING UP ON COLD MORNINGS

An Italian author—Giulio Cordara, a Jesuit—has written a poem upon insects, which he begins by insisting, that those troublesome and abominable little animals were created for our annoyance, and that they were certainly not inhabitants of Paradise. We of the north may dispute this piece of theology; but on the other hand, it is clear as the snow on the house-tops, that Adam was not under the necessity of shaving; and that when Eve walked out of her delicious bower, she did not step upon ice three inches thick.

Some people say it is a very easy thing to get up of a cold morning. You have only, they tell you, to take the resolution; and the thing is done. This may be very true; just as a boy at school has only to take a flogging, and the thing is over. But we have not at all made up our minds upon it; and we find it a very pleasant exercise to discuss the matter, candidly, before we get up. This at least is not idling, though it may be lying. It affords an excellent answer to those, who ask how lying in bed can be indulged in by a reasoning being,—a rational creature. How? Why with the argument calmly at work in one's head, and the clothes over one's shoulder. Oh—it is a fine way of spending a sensible, impartial half-hour.

If these people would be more charitable, they

would get on with their argument better. But they are apt to reason so ill, and to assert so dogmatically, that one could wish to have them stand round one's bed of a bitter morning, and lie before their faces. They ought to hear both sides of the bed, the inside and out. If they cannot entertain themselves with their own thoughts for half an hour or so, it is not the fault of those who can. If their will is never pulled aside by the enticing arms of imagination, so much the luckier for the stage-coachman.

Candid inquiries into one's decumbency, besides the greater or less privileges to be allowed a man in proportion to his ability of keeping early hours, the work given his faculties, etc., will at least concede their due merits to such representations as the following. In the first place, says the injured but calm appealer, I have been warm all night, and find my system in a state perfectly suitable to a warm-blooded animal. To get out of this state into the cold, besides the inharmonious and uncritical abruptness of the transition, is so unnatural to such a creature, that the poets, refining upon the tortures of the damned, make one of their greatest agonies consist in being suddenly transported from heat to cold—from fire to ice. They are "haled" out of their "beds," says Milton, by "harpy-footed furies,"—fellows who come to call them. On my first movement towards the anticipation of getting up, I find

Stage-coachman. The reason, which has to keep the will straight.

Decumbency. Staying in bed.

Harpy-footed furies. See *Paradise Lost*, ii. 596.

that such parts of the sheets and bolster, as are exposed to the air of the room, are stone-cold. On opening my eyes, the first thing that meets them is my own breath rolling forth, as if in the open air, like smoke out of a cottage chimney. Think of this symptom. Then I turn my eyes sideways and see the window all frozen over. Think of that. Then the servant comes in. "It is very cold this morning, is it not?"—"Very cold, Sir."—"Very cold indeed, isn't it?"—"Very cold indeed, Sir."—"More than usually so, isn't it, even for this weather?" (Here the servant's wit and good-nature are put to a considerable test, and the inquirer lies on thorns for the answer.) "Why, Sir . . . I think it *is*." (Good creature! There is not a better, or more truth-telling servant going.) "I must rise, however—get me some warm water."—Here comes a fine interval between the departure of the servant and the arrival of the hot water; during which, of course, it is of "no use" to get up. The hot water comes. "Is it quite hot?"—"Yes, Sir."—"Perhaps too hot for shaving: I must wait a little?"—"No, Sir; it will just do." (There is an over-nice propriety sometimes, an officious zeal of virtue, a little troublesome.) "Oh—the shirt—you must air my clean shirt;—linen gets very damp this weather."—"Yes, Sir." Here another delicious five minutes. A knock at the door. "Oh, the shirt—very well. My stockings—I think the stockings had better be aired too."—"Very well, Sir."—Here another interval. At length everything

Officious. Too obliging.

is ready, except myself. I now, continues our incumbent (a happy word, by the bye, for a country vicar) —I *now* cannot help thinking a good deal—who can?—upon the unnecessary and villainous custom of shaving: it is a thing so unmanly (here I nestle closer)—so effeminate (here I recoil from an unlucky step into the colder part of the bed.)—No wonder that the Queen of France took part with the rebels against the degenerate King, her husband, who first affronted her smooth visage with a face like her own. The Emperor Julian never showed the luxuriancy of his genius to better advantage than in reviving the flowing beard. Look at Cardinal Bembo's picture—at Michael Angelo's—at Titian's—at Shakespeare's—at Fletcher's—at Spenser's—at Chaucer's —at Alfred's—at Plato's—I could name a great man for every tick of my watch.—Look at the Turks, a grave and otiose people.—Think of Haroun Al Raschid and Bed-ridden Hassan.—Think of Wortley Montagu, the worthy son of his mother, a man above the prejudice of his time.—Look at the Persian gentlemen, whom one is ashamed of meeting about the suburbs, their dress and appearance are so much finer than our own.—Lastly, think of the razor itself

Incumbent. In the literal sense, "one who lies in" bed; ordinarily, the holder of an ecclesiastical benefice.

Queen of France. Eleanor, who got a divorce from Louis VII., and then married Henry II. of England.

Otiose. Leisurely.

Bed-ridden Hassan. In the *Arabian Nights*; a joke on Bedreddin.

His mother. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, famous for her *Letters*.

—how totally opposed to every sensation of bed—how cold, how edgy, how hard! how utterly different from anything like the warm and circling amplitude, which

> Sweetly recommends itself
> Unto our gentle senses.

Add to this, benumbed fingers, which may help you to cut yourself, a quivering body, a frozen towel, and a ewer full of ice; and he that says there is nothing to oppose in all this, only shows, at any rate, that he has no merit in opposing it.

Thomson the poet, who exclaims in his *Seasons*

> Falsely luxurious! Will not man awake?

used to lie in bed till noon, because he said [illegible] no motive in getting up. He could imagine the [illegible] of rising; but then he could also imagine [illegible] of lying still; and his exclamation, [illegible] allowed, was made upon summer-time, [illegible] We must proportion the argument [illegible] character. A money-getter may be [illegible] bed by three and four pence; but [illegible] for a student. A proud man may [illegible] I think of myself, if I don't get up [illegible] humble one will be content to wa[illegible] notion of himself, out of respect [illegible] The mechanical man shall get [illegible] at all; and so shall the ba[illegible] lier in bed will find hard matter [illegible]

Sweetly recommends, etc. [illegible]
Thomson. See p. 146.

on the score of health and longevity. He will ask us for our proofs and precedents of the ill effects of lying later in cold weather; and sophisticate much on the advantages of an even temperature of body; of the natural propensity (pretty universal) to have one's way; and of the animals that roll themselves up, and sleep all the winter. As to longevity, he will ask whether the longest life is of necessity the best; and whether Holborn is the handsomest street in London.

We only know of one confounding, not to say confounded argument, fit to overturn the huge luxury, the "enormous bliss"—of the vice in question. A lier in bed may be allowed to profess a disinterested indifference for his health or longevity; but while he is showing the reasonableness of consulting his own or one person's comfort, he must admit the proportionate claim of more than one; and the best way to deal with him is this, especially for a lady; for we earnestly recommend the use of that sex on such occasions, if not somewhat *over*-persuasive; since extremes have an awkward knack of meeting. First then, admit all the ingeniousness of what he says, telling him that the bar has been deprived of an excellent lawyer. Then look at him in the most good-natured manner in the world, with a mixture of assent and appeal in your countenance, and tell him that you are waiting breakfast for him; that you never like to breakfast without him; that you really want it too; that the servants want theirs; that you shall not know how to get the house into

Enormous bliss. Milton, *Paradise Lost*, v. 297.

order, unless he rises; and that you are sure he would do things twenty times worse, even than getting out of his warm bed, to put them all into good humour and a state of comfort. Then, after having said this, throw in the comparatively indifferent matter, to *him*, about his health; but tell him that it is no indifferent matter to you; that the sight of his illness makes more people suffer than one; but that if, nevertheless, he really does feel so very sleepy and so very much refreshed by —— Yet stay; we hardly know whether the frailty of a—— Yes, yes; say that too, especially if you say it with sincerity; for if the weakness of human nature on the one hand and the *vis inertiæ* on the other, should lead him to take advantage of it once or twice, good-humour and sincerity form an irresistible junction at last; and are still better and warmer things than pillows and blankets.

Other little helps of appeal may be thrown in, as occasion requires. You may tell a lover, for instance, that lying in bed makes people corpulent; a father, that you wish him to complete the fine manly example he sets his children; a lady, that she will injure her bloom or her shape, which M. or W. admires so much; and a student or artist, that he is always so glad to have done a good day's work, in his best manner.

Reader. And pray, Mr. Indicator, how do *you* behave yourself in this respect?

Vis inertiæ. Force of indolence; the tendency of a body to remain as it is, whether at rest or in motion.

Indic. Oh, Madam, perfectly, of course; like all advisers.

Reader. Nay, I allow that your mode of argument does not look quite so suspicious as the old way of sermonising and severity, but I have my doubts, especially from that laugh of yours. If I should look in to-morrow morning——

Indic. Ah, Madam, the look in of a face like yours does anything with me. It shall fetch me up at nine, if you please—*six*, I meant to say.

LEIGH HUNT (*The Indicator*, 1820).

XXIV.—"A PENNY PLAIN AND TWOPENCE COLOURED"

THESE words will be familiar to all students of Skelt's Juvenile Drama. That national monument, after having changed its name to Park's, to Webb's, to Redington's, and last of all to Pollock's, has now become, for the most part, a memory. Some of its pillars, like Stonehenge, are still afoot, the rest clean vanished. It may be the Museum numbers a full set; and Mr. Ionides perhaps, or else her gracious Majesty, may boast their great collections; but to the plain private person they are become, like Raphaels, unattainable. I have, at different times, possessed *Aladdin*, *The Red Rover*, *The Blind Boy*,

Her gracious Majesty. Queen Victoria.

The Old Oak Chest, *The Wood Dæmon*, *Jack Sheppard*, *The Miller and his Men*, *Der Freischütz*, *The Smuggler*, *The Forest of Bondy*, *Robin Hood*, *The Waterman*, *Richard I.*, *My Poll and My Partner Joe*, *The Inchcape Bell* (imperfect), and *Three-Fingered Jack, the Terror of Jamaica*; and I have assisted others in the illumination of *The Maid of the Inn* and *The Battle of Waterloo*. In this roll-call of stirring names you read the evidences of a happy childhood; and though not half of them are still to be procured of any living stationer, in the mind of their once happy owner all survive, kaleidoscopes of changing pictures, echoes of the past.

There stands, I fancy, to this day (but now how fallen!) a certain stationer's shop at a corner of the wide thoroughfare that joins the city of my childhood with the sea. When, upon any Saturday, we made a party to behold the ships, we passed that corner; and since in those days I loved a ship as a man loves Burgundy or daybreak, this of itself had been enough to hallow it. But there was more than that. In the Leith Walk window, all the year round, there stood displayed a theatre in working order, with a "forest set," a "combat," and a few "robbers carousing" in the slides; and below and about, dearer tenfold to me! the plays themselves, those budgets of romance, lay tumbled one upon another. Long and often have I lingered there with empty pockets. One figure, we shall say, was visible in the first plate of characters, bearded, pistol in hand, or drawing to his

The city. Edinburgh.

ear the clothyard arrow; I would spell the name: was it Macaire, or Long Tom Coffin, or Grindoff, 2nd dress? O, how I would long to see the rest! how—if the name by chance were hidden—I would wonder in what play he figured, and what immortal legend justified his attitude and strange apparel! And then to go within, to announce yourself as an intending purchaser, and, closely watched, be suffered to undo those bundles and breathlessly devour those pages of gesticulating villains, epileptic combats, bosky forests, palaces and war-ships, frowning fortresses and prison vaults—it was a giddy joy. That shop, which was dark and smelt of Bibles, was a loadstone rock for all that bore the name of boy. They could not pass it by, nor, having entered, leave it. It was a place besieged; the shopmen, like the Jews rebuilding Salem, had a double task. They kept us at the stick's end, frowned us down, snatched each play out of our hand ere we were trusted with another; and, incredible as it may sound, used to demand of us upon our entrance, like banditti, if we came with money or with empty hand. Old Mr. Smith himself, worn out with my eternal vacillation, once swept the treasures from before me, with the cry: "I do not believe, child, that you are an intending purchaser at all!" These were the dragons of the garden; but for such joys of paradise we could have faced the Terror of Jamaica himself. Every sheet we fingered was another light-

Double task. Nehemiah iv. 16. Half of them built; the other half held arms ready to repel any attack.

ning glance into obscure, delicious story; it was like wallowing in the raw stuff of story-books. I know nothing to compare with it save now and then in dreams, when I am privileged to read in certain unwrit stories of adventure, from which I awake to find the world all vanity. The crux of Buridan's donkey was as nothing to the uncertainty of the boy as he handled and lingered and doated on these bundles of delight; there was a physical pleasure in the sight and touch of them which he would jealously prolong; and when at length the deed was done, the play selected, and the impatient shopman had brushed the rest into the gray portfolio, and the boy was forth again, a little late for dinner, the lamps springing into light in the blue winter's even, and *The Miller*, or *The Rover*, or some kindred drama clutched against his side—on what gay feet he ran, and how he laughed aloud in exultation! I can hear that laughter still. Out of all the years of my life, I can recall but one home-coming to compare with these, and that was on the night when I brought back with me the *Arabian Entertainments* in the fat, old, double-columned volume with the prints. I was just well into the story of the Hunchback, I remember, when my clergyman-grandfather (a man we counted pretty stiff) came in behind me. I grew blind with terror. But instead of ordering the

Buridan. A French Schoolman of the fourteenth century; famous for his problem of the hungry ass placed between two equal (and equidistant) bundles of hay; which would he take? Some said neither, and that he would die of starvation. Dante had noted a similar dilemma, *Paradiso*, iv. 1.

book away, he said he envied me. Ah, well he might!

The purchase and the first half-hour at home, that was the summit. Thenceforth the interest declined by little and little. The fable, as set forth in the play-book, proved to be not worthy of the scenes and characters: what fable would not? Such passages as: "Scene 6. The Hermitage. Night set scene. Place back of scene 1, No. 2, at back of stage and hermitage, Fig. 2, out of set piece, R. H. in a slanting direction"—such passages, I say, though very practical, are hardly to be called good reading. Indeed, as literature, these dramas did not much appeal to me. I forget the very outline of the plots. Of *The Blind Boy*, beyond the fact that he was a most injured prince and once, I think, abducted, I know nothing. And *The Old Oak Chest*, what was it all about? that proscript (1st dress), that prodigious number of banditti, that old woman with the broom, and the magnificent kitchen in the third act (was it in the third?)—they are all fallen in a deliquium, swim faintly in my brain, and mix and vanish.

I cannot deny that joy attended the illumination; nor can I quite forget that child who, wilfully forgoing pleasure, stoops to "twopence coloured." With crimson lake (hark to the sound of it—crimson lake! —the horns of elf-land are not richer on the ear)— with crimson lake and Prussian blue a certain purple is to be compounded which, for cloaks especially,

Deliquium. Melting away.

Titian could not equal. The latter colour with gamboge, a hated name although an exquisite pigment, supplied a green of such a savoury greenness that to-day my heart regrets it. Nor can I recall without a tender weakness the very aspect of the water where I dipped my brush. Yes, there was pleasure in the painting. But when all was painted, it is needless to deny it, all was spoiled. You might, indeed, set up a scene or two to look at; but to cut the figures out was simply sacrilege; nor could any child twice court the tedium, the worry, and the long-drawn disenchantment of an actual performance. Two days after the purchase the honey had been sucked. Parents used to complain; they thought I wearied of my play. It was not so: no more than a person can be said to have wearied of his dinner when he leaves the bones and dishes; I had got the marrow of it and said grace.

Then was the time to turn to the back of the play-book and to study that enticing double file of names, where poetry, for the true child of Skelt, reigned happy and glorious like her Majesty the Queen. Much as I have travelled in these realms of gold, I have yet seen, upon that map or abstract, names of El Dorados that still haunt the ear of memory, and are still but names. *The Floating Beacon*—why was that denied me? or *The Wreck Ashore?* *Sixteen-String Jack*, whom I did not even

Realms of gold. From Keats' sonnet *On first Looking into Chapman's Homer.*

El Dorado. The rumoured City of Gold, sought by many adventurers in the New World.

guess to be a highwayman, troubled me awake and haunted my slumbers; and there is one sequence of three from that enchanted calendar that I still at times recall, like a loved verse of poetry: *Lodoiska, Silver Palace, Echo of Westminster Bridge.* Names, bare names, are surely more to children than we poor, grown-up, obliterated fools, remember.

The name of Skelt itself has always seemed a part and parcel of the charm of his productions. It may be different with the rose, but the attraction of this paper drama sensibly declined when Webb had crept into the rubric: a poor cuckoo, flaunting in Skelt's nest. And now we have reached Pollock, sounding deeper gulfs. Indeed, the name of Skelt appears so stagey and piratic, that I will adopt it boldly to design these qualities. Skeltery, then, is a quality of much art. It is even to be found, with reverence be it said, among the works of nature. The stagey is its generic name; but it is an old, insular, home-bred staginess; not French, domestically British; not of to-day, but smacking of O. Smith, Fitzball, and the great age of melodrama: a peculiar fragrance haunting it; uttering its unimportant message in a tone of voice that has the charm of fresh antiquity. I will not insist upon the art of Skelt's purveyors. These wonderful characters that once so thrilled our

Different with the rose.

> That which we call a rose
> By any other name would smell as sweet.
>
> *Romeo and Juliet*, II. ii. 43.

Rubric. Title.
Purveyors. Providers; Stevenson will not say "artists."

soul with their bold attitude, array of deadly engines and incomparable costume, to-day look somewhat pallidly; the extreme hard favour of the heroine strikes me, I had almost said with pain; the villain's scowl no longer thrills me like a trumpet; and the scenes themselves, those once unparalleled landscapes, seem the efforts of a prentice hand. So much of fault we find; but on the other side the impartial critic rejoices to remark the presence of a great unity of gusto; of those direct clap-trap appeals, which a man is dead and buriable when he fails to answer; of the footlight glamour, the ready-made, bare-faced, transpontine picturesque, a thing not one with cold reality, but how much dearer to the mind!

The scenery of Skeltdom—or, shall we say, the kingdom of Transpontus?—had a prevailing character. Whether it set forth Poland as in *The Blind Boy*, or Bohemia with *The Miller and his Men*, or Italy with *The Old Oak Chest*, still it was Transpontus. A botanist could tell it by the plants. The hollyhock was all pervasive, running wild in deserts; the dock was common, and the bending reed; and overshadowing these were poplar, palm, potato tree, and *Quercus Skeltica*—brave growths. The caves were all embowelled in the Surreyside formation; the soil was all betrodden by the light pump of

Transpontine. Literally, across the bridge; meaning here the Surrey side of London, where the nineteenth-century theatres supplied a type of crude, sensational melodrama.

Quercus Skeltica. Skelt's oak—a parody of botanical names.

T. P. Cooke. Skelt, to be sure, had yet another, an oriental string: he held the gorgeous east in fee; and in the new quarter of Hyères, say, in the garden of the Hôtel des Îles d'Or, you may behold these blessed visions realised. But on these I will not dwell; they were an outwork; it was in the occidental scenery that Skelt was all himself. It had a strong flavour of England; it was a sort of indigestion of England and drop-scenes, and I am bound to say was charming. How the roads wander, how the castle sits upon the hill, how the sun eradiates from behind the cloud, and how the congregated clouds themselves uproll, as stiff as bolsters! Here is the cottage interior, the usual first flat, with the cloak upon the nail, the rosaries of onions, the gun and powder-horn and corner-cupboard; here is the inn (this drama must be nautical, I foresee Captain Luff and Bold Bob Bowsprit) with the red curtain, pipes, spittoons, and eight-day clock; and there again is that impressive dungeon with the chains, which was so dull to colour. England, the hedgerow elms, the thin brick houses, windmills, glimpses of the navigable Thames—England, when at last I came to visit it, was only Skelt made evident: to cross the border was, for the Scotsman, to come home to Skelt; there was the inn-sign and there the horse-

T. P. Cooke. He acted the hero of these melodramas, especially *Black-eyed Susan*, in that foot-gear.

Held the gorgeous east in fee. Wordsworth, sonnet *On he Extinction of the Venetian Republic.*

Indigestion. Disordered mixture.

Congregated . . . uproll. Paradise Lost, vii. 291, 308, seems to have been in the writer's mind.

trough, all foreshadowed in the faithful Skelt. If, at the ripe age of fourteen years, I bought a certain cudgel, got a friend to load it, and thenceforward walked the tame ways of the earth my own ideal, radiating pure romance—still I was but a puppet in the hand of Skelt; the original of that regretted bludgeon, and surely the antitype of all the bludgeon kind, greatly improved from Cruikshank, had adorned the hand of Jonathan Wild. "This is mastering me," as Whitman cries, upon some lesser provocation. What am I? what are life, art, letters, the world, but what my Skelt has made them? He stamped himself upon my immaturity. The world was plain before I knew him, a poor penny world; but soon it was all coloured with romance. If I go to the theatre to see a good old melodrama, 'tis but Skelt a little faded. If I visit a bold scene in nature, Skelt would have been bolder; there had been certainly a castle on that mountain, and the hollow tree—that set piece—I seem to miss it in the foreground. Indeed, out of this cut-and-dry, dull, swaggering, obtrusive, and infantile art, I seem to have learned the very spirit of my life's enjoyment; met there the shadows of the characters I was to read about and love in a late future; got the romance of *Der Freischütz* long ere I was to hear of Weber or the mighty Formes; acquired a gallery of scenes and characters with which, in the silent theatre of the

Whitman. Walt Whitman, the American poet, 1819–92.
Der Freischütz. A romantic opera by Weber.
Formes. Carl Formes, a famous singer.

brain, I might enact all novels and romances; and took from these rude cuts an enduring and transforming pleasure. Reader—and yourself?

A word of moral: it appears that B. Pollock, late J. Redington, No. 73 Hoxton Street, not only publishes twenty-three of these old stage favourites, but owns the necessary plates and displays a modest readiness to issue other thirty-three. If you love art, folly, or the bright eyes of children, speed to Pollock's, or to Clarke's of Garrick Street. In Pollock's list of publicanda I perceive a pair of ancient aspirations: *Wreck Ashore* and *Sixteen-String Jack*; and I cherish the belief that when these shall see once more the light of day B. Pollock will remember this apologist. But, indeed, I have a dream at times that is not all a dream. I seem to myself to wander in a ghostly street—E. W., I think, the postal district—close below the fool's-cap of St. Paul's, and yet within easy hearing of the echo of the Abbey bridge. There in a dim shop, low in the roof and smelling strong of glue and footlights, I find myself in quaking treaty with great Skelt himself, the aboriginal, all dusty from the tomb. I buy, with what a choking heart—I buy them all, all but the pantomimes; I pay my mental money, and go forth; and lo! the packets are dust.

R. L. STEVENSON (*Memories and Portraits*, 1887).

Publicanda. Works to be published.
This apologist. I.e., myself, who have written this "apology" or defence of Skeltery.

XXV.—BOOK-BUYING

THE most distinguished of living Englishmen, who, great as he is in many directions, is perhaps inherently more a man of letters than anything else, has been overheard mournfully to declare that there were more booksellers' shops in his native town sixty years ago, when he was a boy in it, than are to-day to be found within its boundaries. And yet the place "all unabashed" now boasts its bookless self a city!

Mr. Gladstone was, of course, referring to second-hand bookshops. Neither he nor any other sensible man puts himself out about new books. When a new book is published, read an old one, was the advice of a sound though surly critic. It is one of the boasts of letters to have glorified the term "second-hand," which other crafts have "soiled to all ignoble use." But why it has been able to do this is obvious. All the best books are necessarily second-hand. The writers of to-day need not grumble. Let them "bide a wee." If their books are worth anything, they, too, one day will be second-hand. If their books are not worth anything there are ancient trades still in full operation amongst us—the pastrycooks and the trunkmakers—who must have paper.

But is there any substance in the plaint that nobody now buys books, meaning thereby second-

hand books? The late Mark Pattison, who had 16,000 volumes, and whose lightest word has therefore weight, once stated that he had been informed, and verily believed, that there were men of his own University of Oxford who, being in uncontrolled possession of annual incomes of not less than £500, thought they were doing the thing handsomely if they expended £50 a year upon their libraries. But we are not bound to believe this unless we like. There was a touch of morosity about the late Rector of Lincoln which led him to take gloomy views of men, particularly Oxford men.

No doubt arguments *a priori* may readily be found to support the contention that the habit of book-buying is on the decline. I confess to knowing one or two men, not Oxford men either, but Cambridge men (and the passion of Cambridge for literature is a by-word), who, on the plea of being pressed with business, or because they were going to a funeral, have passed a bookshop in a strange town without so much as stepping inside "just to see whether the fellow had anything." But painful as facts of this sort necessarily are, any damaging inference we might feel disposed to draw from them is dispelled by a comparison of price-lists. Compare a bookseller's catalogue of 1862 with one of the present year, and your pessimism is washed away by the

Mark Pattison. The learned Rector of Lincoln College, Oxford.

A priori. Inferences drawn from certain considerations; opposed to direct evidence of truth or falseness of the fact in question.

tears which unrestrainedly flow as you see what *bonnes fortunes* you have lost. A young book-buyer might well turn out upon Primrose Hill and bemoan his youth, after comparing old catalogues with new.

Nothing but American competition, grumble some old stagers.

Well! why not? This new battle for the books is a free fight, not a private one, and Columbia has "joined in." Lower prices are not to be looked for. The book-buyer of 1900 will be glad to buy at to-day's prices. I take pleasure in thinking he will not be able to do so. Good finds grow scarcer and scarcer. True it is that but a few short weeks ago I picked up (such is the happy phrase, most apt to describe what was indeed a "street casualty") a copy of the original edition of *Endymion* (Keats's poem—O subscriber to Mudie's!—not Lord Beaconsfield's novel) for the easy equivalent of half-a-crown—but then that was one of my lucky days. The enormous increase of booksellers' catalogues and their wide circulation amongst the trade has already produced a hateful uniformity of prices. Go where you will it is all the same to the odd sixpence. Time was when you could map out the country for yourself with some hopefulness of plunder. There were districts where the Elizabethan dramatists were but slenderly protected. A raid into the "bonnie North Countrie" sent you home again cheered with

This new battle, etc. Refers to *The Battle of the Books*, one of Swift's works.

p-books and weighted with old pamphlets of curious
:rest; whilst the West of England seldom failed
yield a crop of novels. I remember getting a
nplete set of the Brontë books in the original
ies at Torquay, I may say, for nothing. Those
ys are over. Your country bookseller is, in fact,
re likely, such tales does he hear of London
ctions, and such catalogues does he receive by
ery post, to exaggerate the value of his wares than
part with them pleasantly, and as a country
ookseller should, "just to clear my shelves,
ou know, and give me a bit of room." The only
ompensation for this is the catalogues them-
elves. You get *them*, at least, for nothing, and it
annot be denied that they make mighty pretty
eading.

These high prices tell their own tale, and force upon us the conviction that there never were so many private libraries in course of growth as there are to-day.

Libraries are not made; they grow. Your first two thousand volumes present no difficulty, and cost astonishingly little money. Given £400 and five years, and an ordinary man can in the ordinary course, without undue haste or putting any pressure upon his taste, surround himself with this number of books, all in his own language, and thenceforward have at least one place in the world in which it is

Chap-books. Popular tales, ballads, etc., which used to be sold by pedlars or chapmen.
Brontë books. The novels of the three Miss Brontës.

possible to be happy. But pride is still out of the question. To be proud of having two thousand books would be absurd. You might as well be proud of having two top-coats. After your first two thousand volumes difficulty begins, but until you have ten thousand volumes the less you say about your library the better. *Then* you may begin to speak.

It is no doubt a pleasant thing to have a library left you. The present writer will disclaim no such legacy, but hereby undertakes to accept it, however dusty. But good as it is to inherit a library, it is better to collect one. Each volume then, however lightly a stranger's eye may roam from shelf to shelf, has its own individuality, a history of its own. You remember where you got it, and how much you gave for it; and your word may safely be taken for the first of these facts, but not for the second.

The man who has a library of his own collection is able to contemplate himself objectively, and is justified in believing in his own existence. No other man but he would have made precisely such a combination as his. Had he been in any single respect different from what he is, his library, as it exists, never would have existed. Therefore, surely he may exclaim, as in the gloaming he contemplates the backs of his loved ones, "They are mine, and I am theirs."

But the eternal note of sadness will find its way even through the keyhole of a library. You tr

some familiar page, of Shakespeare it may be, and his "infinite variety," his "multitudinous mind," suggests some new thought, and as you are wondering over it you think of Lycidas, your friend, and promise yourself the pleasure of having his opinion of your discovery the very next time when by the fire you two "help waste a sullen day." Or it is, perhaps, some quainter, tenderer fancy that engages your solitary attention, something in Sir Philip Sidney or Henry Vaughan, and then you turn to look for Phyllis, ever the best interpreter of love, human or divine. Alas! the printed page grows hazy beneath a filmy eye as you suddenly remember that Lycidas is dead—"dead ere his prime"—and that the pale cheek of Phyllis will never again be relumined by the white light of her pure enthusiasm. And then you fall to thinking of the inevitable, and perhaps, in your present mood, not unwelcome hour, when the "ancient peace" of your old friends will be disturbed, when rude hands will dislodge them from their accustomed nooks and break up their goodly company.

> Death bursts amongst them like a shell,
> And strews them over half the town.

They will form new combinations, lighten other

Infinite variety. Shakespeare's own phrase, used of Cleopatra.

Help waste a sullen day. Milton, *Sonnet to Mr. Lawrence.*

Sir Philip Sidney. Wrote *Arcadia*, a pastoral love-romance (1590).

Vaughan. A mystical religious poet of the seventeenth century.

men's toil, and soothe another's sorrow. Fool that I was to call anything *mine*!

AUGUSTINE BIRRELL (*Obiter Dicta*, Second Series, 1887).

XXVI.—THE WHOLE DUTY OF WOMAN

It is universally conceded that our great-grandmothers were women of the most precise life and austere manners. The girls nowadays display a shocking freedom; but they were partly led into it by the relative laxity of their mothers, who, in their turn, gave great anxiety to a still earlier generation. To hear all the "Ahs" and the "Well, I nevers" of the middle-aged, one would fancy that propriety of conduct was a thing of the past, and that never had there been a "gaggle of girls" (the phrase belongs to Dame Juliana Berners) so wanton and rebellious as the race of 1895. Still, there must be a fallacy somewhere. If each generation is decidedly wilder, more independent, more revolting, and more insolent than the one before, how exceedingly good people must have been four or five generations ago! Outside the pages of the people so sweetly advertised as "sexual female fictionists," the girls of to-day do not strike one as extremely bad. Some of them are

Dame Juliana Berners. Prioress of a nunnery, in the fifteenth century; wrote a *Book of Hunting*, etc.

quite nice; the average is not very low. How lofty, then, must have been the standard one hundred years ago, to make room for such a steady decline ever since! Poor J. K. S. wrote:

> If all the harm that's been done by men
> Were doubled and doubled and doubled again,
> And melted and fused into vapour, and then
> Were squared and raised to the power of ten,
> There wouldn't be nearly enough, not near,
> To keep a small girl for a tenth of a year.

This is the view of a cynic. To the ordinary observer, the "revolting daughters," of whom we hear so much, do not revolt nearly enough to differentiate them duly from their virtuous great-grandmothers.

We fear that there was still a good deal of human nature in girls a hundred, or even two hundred, years ago. That eloquent and animated writer, the author of *The Whole Duty of Man*, published in the reign of Charles II., a volume which, if he had had the courage of his opinions, he would have named *The Whole Duty of Woman*. Under the tamer title of *The Ladies' Calling* it achieved a great success. In the frontispiece to this work a doleful dame, seated on what seems to be a bare altar in an open landscape, is raising one hand to grasp a crown

J. K. S. James Keith Stephen, 1859–92; journalist, orator and writer of light verse; his early and tragic death disappointed many high hopes. The lines quoted are of course *ironical*.

The Whole Duty of Man. Written in 1659; ascribed to three archbishops, two bishops, several less dignified clergymen, and Lady Packington.

dangled out of her reach in the clouds, and in the other, with an air of great affectation, is lifting her skirt between finger and thumb. A purse, a coronet, a fan, a mirror, rings, dice, coins, and other useful articles lie strewn at her naked feet; she spurns them, and lifts her streaming eyes to heaven. This is the sort of picture which does its best to prevent the reader from opening the book; but *The Ladies' Calling*, nevertheless, is well worth reading. It excites in us a curious wish to know more exactly what manner of women it was addressed to. How did the great-grandmothers of our great-grandmothers behave? When we come to think of it, how little we know about them!

The customary source of information is the play-book of the time. There, indeed, we came across some choice indications of ancient woman's behaviour. Nor did the women spare one another. The woman dramatists outdid the men in attacking the manners of their sex, and what is perhaps the most cynical comedy in all literature was written by a woman. It will be some time before the Corinnas of *The Yellow Book* contrive to surpass *The Town Fop* in outrageous frankness. Our ideas of the fashions of the seventeenth century are, however, taken too exclusively, if they are taken from these plays alone. We conceive every fine lady to be like Lady Brute, in *The Provok'd Wife*, who wakes about

Corinna was a Greek poetess.
The Yellow Book. An illustrated quarterly (1894–96).
The Town Fop. By Mrs. Aphra Behn (1677).
The Provok'd Wife. By Sir John Vanbrugh (1697).

two o'clock in the afternoon, is "trailed" to her great chair for tea, leaves her bedroom only to descend to dinner, spends the night with a box and dice, and does not go to bed until the dawn. Comedy has always forced the note, and is a very unsafe (though picturesque) guide to historic manners. Perhaps we obtain a juster notion from the gallant pamphlets of the age, such as *The Lover's Watch* and *The Lady's Looking-Glass*; yet these were purely intended for people whom we should nowadays call "smart," readers who hung about the outskirts of the Court.

For materials, then, out of which to construct a portrait of the ordinary woman of the world in the reign of Charles II., we are glad to come back to our anonymous divine. His is the best-kept secret in English literature. In spite of the immense success of *The Whole Duty of Man*, no one has done more than conjecture, more or less vaguely, who he may have been. He wrote at least five works besides his most famous treatise, and in preparing each of these for the press he took more pains than Junius did a century later to conceal his identity. The publisher of *The Ladies' Calling*, for example, assures us that he knows no more than we do. The MS. came to him from an unknown source and in a strange handwriting, "as from the Clouds dropt into my hands." The anonymous author made no attempt to see proofs of it, nor claimed his foundling in any way whatever. In his *English Prose Selections*, the recent

Junius. See p. 139.

third volume of which covers the ground we are dealing with, Mr. Craik, although finding room for such wretched writers as Bishop Cumberland and William Sherlock, makes no mention of the author of *The Whole Duty*. That is a curious oversight. There was no divine of the age who wielded a more graceful pen. Only the exigencies of our space restrain us from quoting the noble praise of the Woman-Confessor in the preface to *The Ladies' Calling*. It begins "Queens and Empresses knew then no title so glorious"; and the reader who is curious in such matters will refer to it for himself.

The women of this time troubled our author by their loudness of speech. There seems some reason to believe that with the Restoration, and in opposition to the affected whispering of the Puritans, a truculent and noisy manner became the fashion among Englishwomen. This was, perhaps, the "barbarous dissonance" that Milton deprecated; it is, at all events, so distasteful to the writer of *The Ladies' Calling* that he gives it an early prominence in his exhortation. "A woman's tongue," he says, "should be like the imaginary music of the spheres, sweet and charming, but not to be heard at distance." Modesty, indeed, he inculcates as the first ornament of womanhood, and he intimates that there was much neglect of it in his day. We might fancy it to be Mrs. Lynn Linton speaks [illegible]

Woman-Confessor. One who avows her rel[illegible] of persecution.

Barbarous dissonance. See *Para[illegible]* [illegible]

when, with uplifted hands, he cries, "Would God that they would take, in exchange for that virile Boldness, which is now too common among many even of the best Rank," such a solidity and firmness of mind as will permit them to succeed in—keeping a secret! Odd to hear a grave and polite divine urging the ladies of his congregation not to "adorn" their conversation with oaths and imprecations, of which he says, with not less truth than gallantry, that "out of a woman's mouth there is on this side Hell no noise that can be more amazingly odious." The revolting daughters of to-day do not curse and swear; at all events, they do not swear in print, where only we have met the shrews. On the other hand, they smoke, a contingency which does not seem to have occurred to the author of *The Ladies' Calling*, who nowhere warns the sisterhood against tobacco. The gravity of his indictment of excess in wine, not less than the evidence of such observers as Pepys, proves to us that drunkenness was by no means rare even among women of quality.

There never, we suppose, from the beginning of the world was a man-preacher who did not warn the women of his congregation against the vanity of fair raiment. The author of *The Ladies' Calling* is no exception; but he does his spiriting in a gentleman-like way. The ladies came to listen to him bedizened with jewels, with all the objects which lie strewn at the feet of his penitent in the frontispiece. He does

Pepys wrote his famous *Diary* in Charles II.'s time.
Spiriting. See *The Tempest*, I. ii. 298.

not scream to them to rend them off. He only remonstrates at their costliness. In that perfectly charming record of a child's mind, the *Memoir of Marjorie Fleming*, the delicious little wiseacre records the fact that her father and mother have given a guinea for a pineapple, remarking that that money would have sustained a poor family during the entire winter. We are reminded of that when our divine tells his auditors that "any one of the baubles, the loosest appendage of the dress, a fan, a busk, perhaps a black patch, bears a price that would warm the empty bowels of a poor starving wretch." This was long before the days of very elaborate and expensive patches, which were still so new in Pepys's days that he remarked on those of Mr. Penn's pretty sister when he saw her in the new coach, "patched and very fine." Our preacher is no ranter, nor does he shut the door of mercy on entertainments; all he deprecates is their excess. His penitents are not forbidden to spend an afternoon at the theatre, or an evening in dancing or at cards; but they are desired to remember that, delightful as these occupations are, devotion is more delightful still.

The attitude of the author to gaming is curious. "I question not the lawfulness of this recreation," he says distinctly; but he desires his ladies not to make cards the business of their life, and especially not to play on Sundays. It appears that some great ladies, in the emptiness of their heads and hearts,

Marjorie Fleming. See Dr. John Brown's essay

took advantage of the high pews then always found in churches to play ombre or quadrille under the very nose of the preacher. This conduct must have been rare; the legends of the age prove that it was not unknown. The game might be concealed from every one if it was desisted from at the moment of the sermon, and in many cases the clergyman was a pitiful, obsequious wretch who knew better than to find fault with the gentlefolks "up at the house." It was not often that a convenient flash of lightning came in the middle of service to kill the impious gamester in his pew, as happened, to the immense scandal and solemnisation of everybody, at Withycombe, in Devonshire.

On the whole, it is amusing to find that the same faults and the same dangers which occupy our satirists to-day were pronounced imminent for women two hundred years ago. The ladies of Charles II.'s reign were a little coarser, a little primmer, a good deal more ignorant than those of our age. Their manners were on great occasions much better, and on small occasions much worse, than those of their descendants of 1895; but the same human nature prevailed. The author of *The Ladies' Calling* considered that the greatest danger of his congregation lay in the fact that "the female Sex is eminent for its pungency in the sensible passion of love"; and, although we take other modes of saying it, that is true now.

EDMUND GOSSE (*The Realm*), 1895.

Pungency. Intensity.

XXVII.—A DEFENCE OF NONSENSE

THERE are two equal and eternal ways of looking at this twilight world of ours: we may see it as the twilight of evening or the twilight of morning; we may think of anything, down to a fallen acorn, as a descendant or as an ancestor. There are times when we are almost crushed, not so much with the load of the evil as with the load of the goodness of humanity, when we feel that we are nothing but the inheritors of a humiliating splendour. But there are other times when everything seems primitive, when the ancient stars are only sparks blown from a boy's bonfire, when the whole earth seems so young and experimental that even the white hair of the aged, in the fine biblical phrase, is like almond-trees that blossom, like the white hawthorn grown in May. That it is good for a man to realise that he is "the heir of all the ages" is pretty commonly admitted; it is a less popular but equally important point that it is good for him sometimes to realise that he is not only an ancestor, but an ancestor of primal antiquity; it is good for him to wonder whether he is not a hero, and to experience ennobling doubts as to whether he is not a solar myth.

Almond-trees. Ecclesiastes xii. 5.
The heir of all the ages. Tennyson, *Locksley Hall.*
Solar myth. I.e., a primitive god or hero, whose story is a personification of the sun's proceedings. See Mr. Kipling's poem, *Giffen's Debt.*

The matters which most thoroughly evoke this sense of the abiding childhood of the world are those which are really fresh, abrupt and inventive in any age; and if we were asked what was the best proof of this adventurous youth in the nineteenth century we should say, with all respect to its portentous sciences and philosophies, that it was to be found in the rhymes of Mr. Edward Lear and in the literature of nonsense. *The Dong with the Luminous Nose*, at least, is original, as the first ship and the first thought were original.

It is true in a certain sense that some of the greatest writers the world has seen—Aristophanes, Rabelais and Sterne—have written nonsense; but unless we are mistaken, it is in a widely different sense. The nonsense of these men was satiric—that is to say, symbolic; it was a kind of exuberant capering round a discovered truth. There is all the difference in the world between the instinct of satire, which, seeing in the Kaiser's moustaches something typical of him, draws them continually larger and larger; and the instinct of nonsense which, for no reason whatever, imagines what those moustaches would look like on the present Archbishop of Canterbury if he grew them in a fit of absence of mind. We incline to think that no age except our own could have understood that the Quangle-Wangle meant absolutely nothing, and the Lands of the Jumblies were absolutely nowhere. We fancy that if the account of the Knave's trial in *Alice in Wonderland* had been published in the seventeenth century

it would have been bracketed with Bunyan's Trial of Faithful as a parody on the State prosecutions of the time. We fancy that if *The Dong with the Luminous Nose* had appeared in the same period every one would have called it a dull satire on Oliver Cromwell.

It is altogether advisedly that we quote chiefly from Mr. Lear's *Nonsense Rhymes*. To our mind he is both chronologically and essentially the father of nonsense; we think him superior to Lewis Carroll. In one sense, indeed, Lewis Carroll has a great advantage. We know what Lewis Carroll was in daily life: he was a singularly serious and conventional don, universally respected, but very much of a pedant and something of a Philistine. Thus his strange double life in earth and in dreamland emphasises the idea that lies at the back of nonsense—the idea of *escape*, of escape into a world where things are not fixed horribly in an eternal appropriateness, where apples grow on pear-trees, and any odd man you meet may have three legs. Lewis Carroll, living one life in which he would have thundered morally against any one who walked on the wrong plot of grass, and another life in which he would cheerfully call the sun green and the moon blue, was, by his very divided nature, his one foot on both worlds, a perfect type of the position of modern nonsense. His Wonderland is a country

Don. Fellow of a University college.

Philistine. Deficient in liberal culture; a German usage popularised by Carlyle and Matthew Arnold.

populated by insane mathematicians. We feel the whole is an escape into a world of masquerade; we feel that if we could pierce their disguises, we might discover that Humpty Dumpty and the March Hare were Professors and Doctors of Divinity enjoying a mental holiday. This sense of escape is certainly less emphatic in Edward Lear, because of the completeness of his citizenship in the world of unreason. We do not know his prosaic biography as we know Lewis Carroll's. We accept him as a purely fabulous figure, on his own description of himself:

> His body is perfectly spherical,
> He weareth a runcible hat.

While Lewis Carroll's Wonderland is purely intellectual, Lear introduces quite another element—the element of the poetical and even emotional. Carroll works by the pure reason, but this is not so strong a contrast; for, after all, mankind in the main has always regarded reason as a bit of a joke. Lear introduces his unmeaning words and his amorphous creatures not with the pomp of reason, but with the romantic prelude of rich hues and haunting rhythms.

> Far and few, far and few,
> Are the lands where the Jumblies live,

is an entirely different type of poetry to that exhibited in *Jabberwocky*. Carroll, with a sense of mathematical neatness, makes his whole poem a

Runcible. All efforts to fix the meaning of this beautiful word have—very properly—broken down; "tortoise-shell" is dangerously suitable in several cases, but not here.

mosaic of new and mysterious words. But Edward Lear, with more subtle and placid effrontery, is always introducing scraps of his own elvish dialect into the middle of simple and rational statements, until we are almost stunned into admitting that we know what they mean. There is a genial ring of common sense about such lines as,

> For his aunt Jobiska said " Every one knows
> That a Pobble is better without his toes,"

which is beyond the reach of Carroll. The poet seems so easy on the matter that we are almost driven to pretend that we see his meaning, that we know the peculiar difficulties of a Pobble, that we are as old travellers in the "Gromboolian Plain" as he is.

Our claim that nonsense is a new literature (we might almost say a new sense) would be quite indefensible if nonsense were nothing more than a mere æsthetic fancy. Nothing sublimely artistic has ever arisen out of mere art, any more than anything essentially reasonable has ever arisen out of pure reason. There must always be a rich moral soil for any great æsthetic growth. The principle of *art for art's sake* is a very good principle if it means that there is a vital distinction between the earth and the tree that has its roots in the earth; but it is a very bad principle if it means that the tree could grow just as well with its roots in the air. Every great literature has always been allegorical—allegorical of some view of the whole universe. The *Iliad*

is only great because all life is a battle, the *Odyssey* because all life is a journey, the Book of Job because all life is a riddle. There is one attitude in which we think that all existence is summed up in the word "ghosts"; another, and somewhat better one, in which we think it is summed up in the words "A Midsummer Night's Dream." Even the vulgarest melodrama or detective story can be good if it expresses something of the delight in sinister possibilities—the healthy lust for darkness and terror which may come on us any night in walking down a dark lane. If, therefore, nonsense is really to be the literature of the future, it must have its own version of the Cosmos to offer; the world must not only be tragic, romantic and religious, it must be nonsensical also. And here we fancy that nonsense will, in a very unexpected way, come to the aid of the spiritual view of things. Religion has for centuries been trying to make men exult in the "wonders" of creation, but it has forgotten that a thing cannot be completely wonderful so long as it remains sensible. So long as we regard a tree as an obvious thing, naturally and reasonably created for a giraffe to eat, we cannot properly wonder at it. It is when we consider it as a prodigious wave of the living soil sprawling up to the skies for no reason in particular that we take off our hats, to the astonishment of the park-keeper. Everything has in fact another side to it, like the moon, the patroness of nonsense. Viewed from that other side, a bird is a

Cosmos. The ordered universe.

blossom broken loose from its chain of stalk, a man a quadruped begging on its hind legs, a house a gigantesque hat to cover a man from the sun, a chair an apparatus of four wooden legs for a cripple with only two.

This is the side of things which tends most truly to spiritual wonder. It is significant that in the greatest religious poem existent, the Book of Job, the argument which convinces the infidel is not (as has been represented by the merely rational religionism of the eighteenth century) a picture of the ordered beneficence of the Creation; but, on the contrary, a picture of the huge and undecipherable unreason of it. "Hast Thou sent the rain upon the desert where no man is?" This simple sense of wonder at the shapes of things, and at their exuberant independence of our intellectual standards and our trivial definitions, is the basis of spirituality as it is the basis of nonsense. Nonsense and faith (strange as the conjunction may seem) are the two supreme symbolic assertions of the truth that to draw out the soul of things with a syllogism is as impossible as to draw out Leviathan with a hook. The well-meaning person who, by merely studying the logical side of things, has decided that "faith is nonsense," does not know how truly he speaks; later it may come back to him in the form that nonsense is faith

G. K. CHESTERTON (*The Defendant*, 1901).

Leviathan, etc. Job xli. 1.

XXVIII.—A FUNERAL

It was in a Surrey churchyard on a grey, damp afternoon—all very solitary and quiet, with no alien spectators and only a very few mourners; and no desolating sense of loss, although a very true and kindly friend was passing from us. A football match was in progress in a field adjoining the churchyard, and I wondered, as I stood by the grave, if, were I the schoolmaster, I would stop the game just for the few minutes during which a body was committed to the earth; and I decided that I would not. In the midst of death we are in life, just as in the midst of life we are in death; it is all as it should be in this bizarre, jostling world. And he whom we had come to bury would have been the first to wish the boys to go on with their sport.

He was an old scholar—not so very old, either—whom I had known for some five years, and had many a long walk with: a short and sturdy Irish gentleman, with a large, genial grey head stored with odd lore and the best literature; and the heart of a child. I never knew a man of so transparent a character. He showed you all his thoughts: as some one once said, his brain was like a beehive under glass—you could watch all its workings. And the honey in it! To walk with him at any season of

In the midst of life, etc. From the Funeral Service in the *Book of Common Prayer*.

the year was to be reminded or newly told of the best that the English poets have said on all the phenomena of wood and hedgerow, meadow and sky. He had the more lyrical passages of Shakespeare at his tongue's end, and all Wordsworth and Keats. These were his favourites; but he had read everything that has the true rapturous note, and had forgotten none of its spirit.

His life was divided between his books, his friends, and long walks. A solitary man, he worked at all hours without much method, and probably courted his fatal illness in this way. To his own name there is not much to show; but such was his liberality that he was continually helping others, and the fruits of his erudition are widely scattered, and have gone to increase many a comparative stranger's reputation. His own *magnum opus* he left unfinished; he had worked at it for years, until to his friends it had come to be something of a joke. But though still shapeless, it was a great feast, as the world, I hope, will one day know. If, however, this treasure does not reach the world, it will not be because its worth was insufficient, but because no one can be found to decipher the manuscript; for I may say incidentally that our old friend wrote the worst hand in London, and it was not an uncommon experience of his correspondents to carry his missives from one pair of eyes to another, seeking a clue; and I remember on one occasion two such inquirers meeting unexpectedly, and each simultaneously drawing a letter

Magnum opus. The "great work" of a man's life.

from his pocket and uttering the request that the other should put everything else on one side in order to solve the enigma.

Lack of method and a haphazard and unlimited generosity were not his only Irish qualities. He had a quick, chivalrous temper, too, and I remember the difficulty I once had in restraining him from leaping the counter of a small tobacconist's in Great Portland Street, to give the man a good dressing for an imagined rudeness—not to himself, but to me. And there is more than one 'bus conductor in London who has cause to remember this sturdy Quixotic passenger's championship of a poor woman to whom insufficient courtesy seemed to him to have been shown. Normally kindly and tolerant, his indignation on hearing of injustice was red hot. He burned at a story of meanness. It would haunt him all the evening. "Can it really be true?" he would ask, and burst forth again to flame.

Abstemious himself in all things, save reading and writing and helping his friends and correspondents, he mixed excellent whisky punch, as he called it. He brought to this office all the concentration which he lacked in his literary labours. It was a ritual with him; nothing might be hurried or left undone, and the result, I might say, justified the means. His death reduces the number of such convivial alchemists to one only, and he is in Tasmania, and, so far as I am concerned, useless.

His avidity as a reader—his desire to master his subject—led to some charming eccentricities, as

when, for a daily journey between Earl's Court Road and Addison Road stations, he would carry a heavy hand-bag filled with books, "to read in the train." This was no satire on the railway system, but pure zeal. He had indeed no satire in him; he spoke his mind and it was over.

It was a curious little company that assembled to do honour to this old kindly bachelor—the two or three relatives that he possessed, and eight of his literary friends, most of them of a good age, and for the most part men of intellect, and in one or two cases of world-wide reputation, and all a little uncomfortable in unwonted formal black. We were very grave and thoughtful, but it was not exactly a sad funeral, for we knew that had he lived longer—he was sixty-three—he would certainly have been an invalid, which would have irked his active, restless mind and body almost unbearably; and we knew, also, that he had died in his first real illness after a very happy life. Since we knew this, and also that he was a bachelor and almost alone, those of us who were not his kin were not melted and unstrung by that poignant sense of untimely loss and irreparable removal that makes some funerals so tragic; but death, however it come, is a mystery before which one cannot stand unmoved and unregretful; and I, for one, as I stood there, remembered how easy it would have been oftener to have ascended to his eyrie and lured him out into Hertfordshire or his beloved Epping, or even dragged him [illegible] to dinner and whisky punch; and I foun[illegible]

meditating, too, as the profoundly impressive service rolled on, how melancholy it was that all that storied brain, with its thousands of exquisite phrases and its perhaps unrivalled knowledge of Shakespearean philology, should have ceased to be. For such a cessation, at any rate, say what one will of immortality, is part of the sting of death, part of the victory of the grave, which St. Paul denied with such magnificent irony.

And then we filed out into the churchyard, which is a new and very large one, although the church is old, and at a snail's pace, led by the clergyman, we crept along, a little black company, for, I suppose, nearly a quarter of a mile, under the cold grey sky. As I said, many of us were old, and most of us were indoor men, and I was amused to see how close to the head some of us held our hats—the merest barleycorn of interval being maintained for reverence' sake; whereas the sexton and the clergyman had slipped on those black velvet skull-caps which God, in His infinite mercy, either completely overlooks, or seeing, smiles at. And there our old friend was committed to the earth, amid the contending shouts of the football players, and then we all clapped our hats on our heads with firmness (as he would have wished us to do long before), and returned to the town to drink tea in an ancient hostelry, and exchange memories, quaint, and humorous, and touching, and beautiful, of the dead.

E. V. Lucas (*Character and Comedy*, 1907).

XXIX.—THE LAST GLEEMAN

Michael Moran was born about 1794 off Black Pitts, in the Liberties of Dublin, in Faddle Alley. A fortnight after birth he went stone blind from illness, and became thereby a blessing to his parents, who were soon able to send him to rhyme and beg at street corners and at the bridges over the Liffey. They may well have wished that their quiver were full of such as he, for, free from the interruption of

ragamuffin and of genius which is dear to the heart of woman, who, perhaps because she is wholly conventional herself, loves the unexpected, the crooked, the bewildering. Nor did he lack despite his rags many excellent things, for it is remembered that he ever loved caper sauce, going so far indeed in his honest indignation at its absence upon one occasion as to fling a leg of mutton at his wife. He was not, however, much to look at, with his coarse frieze coat with its cape and scalloped edge, his old corduroy trousers and great brogues, and his stout stick made fast to his wrist by a thong of leather: and he would have been a woeful shock to the gleeman MacConglinne could that friend of kings have beheld him in prophetic vision from the pillar stone at Cork. And yet though the short cloak and the leather wallet were no more, he was a true gleeman, being alike poet, jester, and newsman of the people. In the morning when he had finished his breakfast, his wife or some neighbour would read the newspaper to him, and read on and on until he interrupted with, "That'll do—I have me meditations"; and from these meditations would come the day's store of jest and rhyme. He had the whole Middle Ages under his frieze coat.

He had not, however, MacConglinne's hatred of the Church and clergy, for when the fruit of his meditations did not ripen well, or when the crowd called for something more solid, he would recite or

The Vision of MacConglinne is an Irish burlesque of the twelfth century, founded on a much earlier poem.

sing a metrical tale or ballad of saint or martyr or of Biblical adventure. He would stand at a street corner, and when a crowd had gathered would begin in some such fashion as follows (I copy the record of one who knew him)—"Gather round me, boys, gather round me. Boys, am I standin' in puddle? am I standin' in wet?" Thereon several boys would cry, "Ah, no! yez not! yer in a nice dry place. Go on with *St. Mary*; go on with *Moses*"—each calling for his favourite tale. Then Moran, with a suspicious wriggle of his body and a clutch at his rags, would burst out with "All me buzzim friends are turned backbiters"; and after a final "If yez don't drop your coddin' and deversion I'll lave some of yez a case," by way of warning to the boys, begin his recitation, or perhaps still delay, to ask, "Is there a crowd around me now? Any blackguard heretic around me?" The best-known of his religious tales was *St. Mary of Egypt*, a long poem of exceeding solemnity, condensed from the much longer work of a certain Bishop Coyle. It told how a fast woman of Egypt, Mary by name, followed pilgrims to Jerusalem for no good purpose, and then, turning penitent on finding herself withheld from entering the Temple by supernatural interference, fled to the desert and spent the remainder of her life in solitary penance. When at last she was at the point of death, God sent Bishop Zozimus to hear her confession, give her the last sacrament, and with the help of a lion, whom He sent also, dig her grave. The poem has the intolerable cadence of the eighteenth century, but was so popular

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and so often called for that Moran was soon nicknamed Zozimus, and by that name is he remembered. He had also a poem of his own called *Moses*, which went a little nearer without going very near. But he could ill brook solemnity, and before long parodied his own verses in the following ragamuffin fashion:

In Egypt's land, contagious to the Nile,
King Pharaoh's daughter went to bathe in style.
She tuk her dip, then walked unto the land,
To dry her royal pelt she ran along the strand.
A bulrush tripped her, whereupon she saw
A smiling babby in a wad o' straw.
She tuk it up, and said with accents mild,
" Tare-and-agers, girls, which av yez owns the child? "

His humorous rhymes were, however, more often quips and cranks at the expense of his contemporaries. It was his delight, for instance, to remind a certain shoemaker, noted alike for display of wealth and for personal uncleanness, of his inconsiderable origin in a song of which but the first stanza has come down to us:

At the dirty end of Dirty Lane,
Liv'd a dirty cobbler, Dick Maclane;
His wife was in the old king's reign
    A stout brave orange-woman.
On Essex Bridge she strained her throat,
And six-a-penny was her note.
But Dicky wore a bran-new coat,
    He got among the yeomen.
He was a bigot, like his clan,
And in the streets he wildly sang,
O Roly, toly, toly raid, with his old jade.

He had troubles of divers kinds, and numerous interlopers to face and put down. Once an officious

peeler arrested him as a vagabond, but was triumphantly routed amid the laughter of the court, when Moran reminded his worship of the precedent set by Homer, who was also, he declared, a poet, and a blind man, and a beggarman. He had to face a more serious difficulty as his fame grew. Various imitators started up upon all sides. A certain actor, for instance, made as many guineas as Moran did shillings by mimicking his sayings and his songs and his get-up upon the stage. One night this actor was at supper with some friends, when a dispute arose as to whether his mimicry was overdone or not. It was agreed to settle it by an appeal to the mob. A forty-shilling supper at a famous coffee-house was to be the wager. The actor took up his station at Essex Bridge, a great haunt of Moran's, and soon gathered a small crowd. He had scarce got through "In Egypt's land, contagious to the Nile," when Moran himself came up, followed by another crowd. The crowds met in great excitement and laughter. "Good Christians," cried the pretender, "is it possible that any man would mock the poor dark man like that?"

"Who's that? It's some imposhterer," replied Moran.

"Begone, you wretch! it's you'ze the imposhterer. Don't you fear the light of heaven being struck from your eyes for mocking the poor dark man?"

"Saints and angels, is there no protection against this? You're a most inhuman blaguard to try to

Peeler. Policeman; also known as "bobby," both names derived from Sir Robert Peel, author of the office.

deprive me of my honest bread this way," replied poor Moran.

"And you, you wretch, won't let me go on with the beautiful poem. Christian people, in your charity won't you beat this man away? he's taking advantage of my darkness."

The pretender, seeing that he was having the best of it, thanked the people for their sympathy and protection, and went on with the poem, Moran listening for a time in bewildered silence. After a while Moran protested again with:

"Is it possible that none of yez can know me? Don't yez see it's myself; and that's some one else?"

"Before I proceed any further in this lovely story," interrupted the pretender, "I call on yez to contribute your charitable donations to help me to go on."

"Have you no sowl to be saved, you mocker of heaven?" cried Moran, put completely beside himself by this last injury. "Would you rob the poor as well as desave the world? O, was ever such wickedness known?"

"I leave it to yourselves, my friends," said the pretender, "to give to the real dark man, that you all know so well, and save me from that schemer," and with that he collected some pennies and halfpence. While he was doing so, Moran started his *Mary of Egypt*, but the indignant crowd seizing his stick were about to belabour him, when they fell back bewildered anew by his close resemblance to himself. The pretender now called to them to "just

give him a grip of that villain, and he'd soon let him know who the imposhterer was!" They led him over to Moran, but instead of closing with him he thrust a few shillings into his hand, and turning to the crowd explained to them he was indeed but an actor, and that he had just gained a wager, and so departed amid much enthusiasm, to eat the supper he had won.

In April, 1846, word was sent to the priest that Michael Moran was dying. He found him at 15 (now 14½) Patrick Street, on a straw bed, in a room full of ragged ballad-singers come to cheer his last moments. After his death the ballad-singers, with many fiddles and the like, came again and gave him a fine wake, each adding to the merriment whatever he knew in the way of rann, tale, old saw, or quaint rhyme. He had had his day, had said his prayers and made his confession, and why should they not give him a hearty send-off? The funeral took place the next day. A good party of his admirers and friends got into the hearse with the coffin, for the day was wet and nasty. They had not gone far when one of them burst out with "It's cruel cowld, isn't it?" "Garra'," replied another, "we'll all be as stiff as the corpse when we get to the berrin-ground." "Bad cess to him," said a third; "I wish he'd held out another month until the weather got dacent." A man called Carroll thereupon produced a half-pint of whiskey, and they all drank to the soul of the departed. Unhappily, however, the

Rann. Verse.

hearse was over-weighted, and they had not reached the cemetery before the spring broke, and the bottle with it.

Moran must have felt strange and out of place in that other kingdom he was entering, perhaps while his friends were drinking in his honour. Let us hope that some kindly middle region was found for him, where he can call dishevelled angels about him with some new and more rhythmical form of his old

> Gather round me, boys, will yez
> Gather round me?
> And hear what I have to say
> Before ould Salley brings me
> My bread and jug of tay;

and fling outrageous quips and cranks at cherubim and seraphim. Perhaps he may have found and gathered, ragamuffin though he be, the Lily of High Truth, the Rose of Far-sight Beauty, for whose lack so many of the writers of Ireland, whether famous or forgotten, have been futile as the blown froth upon the shore.

W. B. YEATS (*The Celtic Twilight*, 1893).

COMMENTARY

FURTHER NOTES

(The following Notes are intended for use in a second or third reading of the foregoing Essays.)

I.—OF TRAVEL

"Home-keeping youth have ever homely wits."—*Two Gentlemen of Verona*, I. i.

"The dog that trots about gets a bone."—*Gipsy Proverb*.

"Travelling takes us out of the company of our aunts and grandmothers, and from the track of nursery mistakes . . . shows us new objects, or old ones in new lights."—STERNE.

"I never liked young travellers; they go too raw to make any great remarks, and they lose a time which is (in my opinion) the most precious part of a man's life. . . . Its use depends on the character and circumstances of each individual. . . . The indispensable requisites are age, judgment, a competent knowledge of men and books, and a freedom from domestic prejudices . . . also an active, indefatigable vigour of mind and body."—GIBBON.

"A man must carry knowledge with him if he would bring home knowledge. . . . Time may be employed to more advantage from nineteen to twenty-four almost in any way than by travelling; when you set travelling against mere negation, against doing nothing,

time. . . . What mean servile things men do for this imaginary food!"—COWLEY.

"If each man could read the hearts of all others, there would be more descenders than climbers. . . . The round of little duties always well done demands no less strength than heroic actions, and leads more surely to honour and happiness; the continued esteem of men is worth more than their occasional admiration."—ROUSSEAU.

"Ambition and the love of fame are certainly no Christian principles, but they are such as commonly belong to men of superior minds, and the fruits they produce may often plead their apology."—COWPER.

"To accomplish great things argues, I imagine, great resolution: to design great things implies no common mind. Ambition is in some sort genius."—HAZLITT.

His. Already in the sixteenth century the old use of *his* for the lower animals and inanimate objects was being felt inappropriate, and *thereof* or *of it* were being substituted. *Its* first appears in print about 1600; but it does not occur in the English Bible of 1611, nor in Shakespeare's plays as published in his lifetime.

Humour. The ancient and mediæval physiologists believed that there were four chief fluids or humours in the body—blood, phlegm, choler and melancholy (or black choler). Persons in whom one of these fluids predominated were described as sanguine (Lat. *sanguis*, blood), phlegmatic, choleric or melancholic—the terms applying both to body and mind. Their particular admixture in an individual constituted his *complexion* or *temperament*. Hence the word *humour* came to mean a man's mental disposition, habitual or temporary—his temperament or mood. Compare the title

of Ben Jonson's play, *Every Man in his Humour*. Addison discusses the later meaning of the word in *The Spectator*, No. 35.

IV.—OF STUDIES

Distilled books. Abridgements are usually dull reading, the vivid details being omitted. This is also true of little books on large subjects, except for those readers whose previous knowledge enables them mentally to supply the details, while they can also enjoy the connected view given of the whole subject. Short text-books of history are often dull; detailed histories, if well arranged, seldom.

Philosophy. Elsewhere Bacon distinguishes the book of God's word—divinity, from the book of God's works—philosophy. As God's works fall into two main divisions, the external universe and the mind of man, so philosophy is (1) natural, (2) moral. The first division we now call *natural science*, or, less accurately, *science*; we use *philosophy* to describe the second, which includes metaphysics (the theory of existence and knowledge), ethics (the theory of right and wrong), etc. In the eighteenth century *philosophy* was regularly used for *science*, especially astronomy, the science whose laws were first demonstrated. Compare Keats, *Lamia*:

> Philosophy will clip an Angel's wings,
> Conquer all mysteries by rule and line—

measurement, of dimensions or of weight, being the great instrument of "science."

The Schoolmen. They argued about the doctrines of the Church by the methods of Aristotle's philosophy.

Extraordinary acuteness was displayed in their mental gymnastics. The best-known are Thomas Aquinas, Duns Scotus and Anselm. Aquinas wrote 358 articles on Angels. A great subject of their discussions was: "When a hog is taken to market, is he taken by the rope or by the man who holds it?" Elsewhere Bacon compares them to spiders, for their wonderful skill and flimsy results. "Good and sound knowledge," he says, "may putrefy and dissolve into a number of subtle, idle, unwholesome, vermiculate questions, which have indeed a certain quickness and life of spirit, but no soundness of matter or goodness of quality." Coleridge notes that two-thirds of the most eminent Schoolmen were of British birth; that they made the languages of Europe what they are now; and that they were morning-stars of the Reformation. There is a specimen of their disputations in Longfellow's *Golden Legend,* Scene VI.

Editions of Bacon's Essays: "Everyman's Library" (Dent); with notes by E. H. Blakeney (Blackie); edited by A. S. Gaye (Oxford University Press).

V.—OF MYSELF

Nice. So we still speak of *a nice distinction*; but as applied to persons, from meaning *fastidious*, the word has taken a quite vague sense of *agreeable, pleasing,* and is avoided in serious writing. Thus on p. 184, l. 1, Mr. Gosse marks the colloquial tone of his essay by the phrase "quite nice," of girls.

Grammar. So also Pope "did not follow the grammar; but rather hunted in the [Greek and Latin] authors for a syntax of my own."

Sabine field. "Horace's patron, Mæcenas, gave him a farm in the Sabine hills, thirty miles from Rome. English travellers still visit its site in such numbers, and trace its features with such enthusiasm, that the resident peasantry believe Horace to have been an Englishman."—TYRRELL. Carlyle sought happiness, as Horace found it, in a farm of his own; but his temperament was different, and the plan failed.

Militant and triumphant. Theologians use the phrase *Church militant* to describe Christians on earth warring against the powers of evil, and *Church triumphant* for those who have overcome the world and entered into glory. Cowley transfers the adjectives to a secular sense.

Editions of Cowley's Essays: "Little Library" (Methuen); edited by A. B. Gough (Oxford University Press).

VI.—A VISIT TO A FRIEND

The vein of domestic sentiment has been worked so hard by many writers since Steele, that it may need an effort to appreciate the truth and grace of this charming essay. But it is full worth the effort. On Steele's love of children see p. 231. Addison took up this subject in No. 114, describing the death of the wife.

Laughter. "Having mentioned laughing, I must particularly warn you against it. . . . In my mind there is nothing so illiberal and so ill-bred as audible laughter . . . disagreeable noise . . . shocking distortions of face."—LORD CHESTERFIELD (to his son) "Swift stubbornly resisted any tendency to laughter. . . . By no merriment, either of others or his own, was Pope ever seen excited to laughter."—JOHNSON.

Johnson's own laugh was a kind of good-humoured growl, "like a rhinoceros"; and Wellington's is described as very loud and long, like the whoop of whooping-cough often repeated. Fortunately Chesterfield never heard him.

Don Belianis. His history was familiar to Johnson, for he quotes it as the original of "Open fly . . . Th' infernal doors, and on their hignes grate Harsh thunder" (*Paradise Lost,* ii. 879). Johnson remembered his own early delight in St. George and the Dragon.

The Seven Champions. St. George of England, St. Denys of France, St. James of Spain, St. Antony of Italy, St. Andrew of Scotland, St. Patrick of Ireland, St. David of Wales.

Fairies. Our best-known fairy tales come from Perrault's book, which was not translated into English till 1729, but there must have been a considerable nursery tradition long before that. Scott, Lamb, Coleridge, Southey and Wordsworth are among the upholders of fairy tales as food for the youthful mind. Johnson said: "Babies do not want to hear about babies; they like to be told of giants and castles, and of somewhat which can stretch and stimulate their little minds." Compare Cowley, p. 21.

VII.—THE CLUB

The club is of course imaginary. Steele had already described such a company in the Trumpet Club (*The Tatler*, No. 132). Mr. Spectator has many of the qualities of Addison, and Captain Sentry has something of Steele.

Will's. Already in 1659 we hear of a coffee-house in

London for political discussion, but politics often gave place to gossip on city fashions and foibles. "To read men is acknowledged more useful than books; but where is there a better library for that study generally than here; among such a variety of humours, all expressing themselves on divers subjects according to their respective abilities?"—*The Coffee-Houses Vindicated* (1675).

VIII.—THE MEETING OF THE CLUB

In a body. "Rhetoric against mankind [or even classes and professions] is but a ball bandied to and fro, and every man carries a racket about him, to strike it from himself, among the rest of the company."—SWIFT.

Punch. This was "the golden age of puppets in England." Martin Powell, already satirised in *The Tatler*, was a serious rival of the legitimate theatre. "He established the traditions of action of the modern Punch and Judy, though his *Punchinello* retained many of the characteristics of its Italian ancestry. Punch soon set himself up as a *censor morum* [critic of manners and morals] and gained no little reputation as a political oracle."—GREGORY SMITH.

IX.—SIR ROGER AT HOME

A grey pad. The treatment of old horses has been made a sort of touchstone of their owners' generosity. Cato left his old charger in Spain, to save the state the cost of its transport to Italy; but Plutarch records

this with evident disapproval. "For my own part," he says, "I would not sell even an old ox that had laboured for me." So Keats, while recognising Washington's greatness, regrets that he sold the very charger which had taken him through all his battles. Johnson was perplexed when Boswell consulted him on the subject. "Give as little pain as you can," he says. "And as we take milk and wool, and then kill the givers, why may we not take a horse's services, and then kill him the easiest way?"

Backgammon. Swift mentions backgammon as one of a country vicar's accomplishments. It is a very simple game; the "if possible" and "a little" in this passage indicate Sir Roger's "simplicity." See p. 41, l. 26.

Sermons. The chief objection to Sir Roger's plan seems to lie in the great difficulty of reading another man's composition with the same energy and conviction as would come naturally to the delivery of an original discourse. All oratory is addressed mainly to the feelings: "It is the heart," says Gibbon, "and not the head that holds out"; and to move the hearts of others the preacher must himself be moved. Southey doubted whether sermons do not quench more devotion than they kindle: "They are not harmless if they torpify the understanding." He would limit original sermons to subjects of immediate interest, or those on which the preacher felt strongly; the rest should be borrowed, on Sir Roger's plan. Addison's remarks here are characteristic of the eighteenth-century distrust of enthusiasm. He entirely ignores the prophetic element in preaching, that direct appeal to the feelings and conscience which may make a sermon as "the voice of a god and not of a man." But such power is rare, and inimitable.

X.—WILL WIMBLE

Tulip-root. The first tulip was seen in England in 1600. The tulip mania was at its height in 1635, but exactly two centuries later a single bulb was auctioned in London for £75. Addison has a pleasant essay on tulips in *The Tatler*, No. 218.

My twenty-first speculation. ". . . A sober, frugal person, of slender parts and a slow apprehension, might have thrived in trade, though he starves upon physic [*i.e.*, as a doctor]. . . . It is the great advantage of a trading nation, that there are very few in it so dull and heavy, who may not be placed in stations of life which may give them an opportunity of making their fortunes."—ADDISON. "Dull fellows prove very good men of business. Business relieves them from their own natural heaviness, by furnishing them with what to do."—STEELE. "The great requisite for the prosperous management of ordinary business is the want of imagination, or of any ideas but those of custom and interest on the narrowest scale."—HAZLITT.

XI.—SIR ROGER AT CHURCH

Very well pleased. Notice that Addison does not use the modern vulgarism *very pleased.* Good writers do not use *very* with a past participle, and no one would say *very magnified* or *very criticised.* But many past participles are used like ordinary adjectives, so we may say *very tired*, or *very conceited.*

Editions: The Spectator is published complete (with notes) in "Everyman's Library" (Dent); *Selections*

from the "Tatler," "Spectator" and "Guardian," edited by Austin Dobson (Oxford University Press); *The Coverley Papers*, edited by O. M. Myers (Oxford University Press).

XIII.—A PASSAGE IN "MACBETH"

Johnson was a careful student of Addison, whose remarks on Milton s style in *The Spectator*, No. 285, should be compared with this essay. Eighteenth-century critics were apt to regard the matter and the form of literature as separable things; and poetry in particular seemed to them the result of wrapping truth in ornaments. The reaction from this notion of a special poetic diction was formulated by Wordsworth, and to a considerable extent illustrated in his poetry; and we are now taught to consider the thought and the language of poetry as inseparable: the thing said would be a different thing if expressed in any other way.

The delicate and polite. Wordsworth on the contrary aimed at using the language of rustic life purified from provincialism. But he did not always write down to his theory.

In one age. It seems extraordinary thus to make literature depend for its effectiveness on a temporary fashion of speech. It is only the half-educated who find anything funny in the serious use of such words as "awful," and "bloody."

Dun. Frequently used of the cow, ass and horse; but also otherwise; *e.g.*, "dun shades" (MILTON), "the war-clouds rolling dun (CAMPBELL). No one objects to the word now; Johnson was unlucky in his

age. So also as to the word "knife" below, which Spenser did not find "low"; neither do we.

Blanket. Coleridge also seems to have felt uneasy about this metaphor, as he proposed to read "blank height"—not a happy suggestion.

External embellishments. I.e., polite manners and accomplishments. Johnson defined politeness as "fictitious benevolence"; Macaulay was nearer the mark with his "benevolence in small things," quoted from the great Pitt. Of such embellishments in style Macaulay quotes an example from Johnson's talk. Of a certain play he said, "it has not wit enough to keep it sweet," and then added after a pause, "it has not vitality enough to preserve it from putrefaction."

Shenstone's opinion of Johnson's style in *The Rambler* is worth noting: "Excepting against some few hardnesses in his manner, and the want of more examples to enliven, he is one of the most nervous, most perspicuous, most concise, most harmonious prose writers I know. A learned diction improves by time" (1760). Coleridge said: "He creates an impression of cleverness by never saying anything in a common way." Johnson himself said: "When common words were less pleasing to the ear, or less distinct in their signification, I have familiarised the terms of philosophy, by applying them to popular ideas."

XVII.—CHRIST'S HOSPITAL FIVE AND THIRTY YEARS AGO

New River. An artificial river constructed in 1609–13, to supply London with water. Lamb returns to this subject in *Newspapers Thirty-five Years Ago*.

Young ass. Mr. G. A. Greene compares Tennyson's story, in *Walking to the Mail*, how boys at "a college in the South" dragged a sow upstairs, hid her in the roof, and stole her young till she was left alone, "the Niobe of Swine." Apparently they were as fond of sucking-pig as Lamb himself. It is said to be an Eton tale. Lamb's story is not known to have happened.

Boyer. At the beginning of *Biographia Literaria* Coleridge pays a high tribute to the value of Boyer's teaching.

Gideon's miracle. Lamb's note refers to Cowley, *The Complaint*, VI. But Lamb forgets (though Cowley does not) that Gideon's miracle was two-fold; the second would have suited his case.

XIX.—OLD CHINA

A middle state. Compare Agur's wish, Proverbs xxx. 8: "Give me neither poverty nor riches, feed me with food convenient for me; lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain."

Lady Blanch. Mary Lamb wrote a poem, which has perished, on "Blanch, the lady of the matchless grace."

XX.—POPULAR FALLACIES

III. THAT WE SHOULD RISE WITH THE LARK

Our dreams. Sir T. Browne, a favourite author of Lamb's, thanked God for his happy dreams.

Death . . . his image. "Sleep is that death by which we may be literally said to die daily . . . in

fine, so like death, I dare not trust it without my prayers, and an half adieu unto the world, and take my farewell in a colloquy with God."—SIR T. BROWNE. The poets often call sleep the brother of death.

Editions of Lamb's Essays: "Everyman's Library," with introduction by Augustine Birrell (Dent); with a memoir by Barry Cornwall, 2 vols. (Bell).

XXI.—OF PERSONS ONE WOULD WISH TO HAVE SEEN

This Essay professes to reproduce a discussion at one of the Lambs' Wednesday evenings at home.

My love is slain. Walton in his *Life of Donne* tells how, when the journey to France was proposed, Mrs. Donne being in delicate health tried to dissuade her husband from making it, saying that her divining soul boded her some ill in his absence.

Bartlemy-fair. Bartholomew Fair was held at Smithfield, and lasted till 1850. Rude acting in booths was a prominent feature.

Admirable Crichton. James Crichton was a precocious Scot who took his M.A. degree at St. Andrew's at the age of fifteen. He then served in France, and displayed in Italy his accomplishments as athlete, scholar, poet, linguist and memory-expert. His name was made famous by the fantastic eulogy written by Sir Thomas Urquhart in 1652.

Guy Faux. Lamb's humour delighted to play with this semi-comic, semi-tragic figure. In 1831 he immensely offended Carlyle by regretting the failure of the Plot—there would have been so glorious an explosion!

Editions of Hazlitt: Lectures on the English Comic Writers ("Everyman's Library") contains a number of the essays; *The Spirit of the Age, and English Poets* ("Everyman's Library") is admirable reading.

XXIII.—GETTING UP ON COLD MORNINGS

Edition of Leigh Hunt: There is a good selection of the *Essays* in the Camelot Series (Walter Scott).

XXIV.—"A PENNY PLAIN AND TWOPENCE COLOURED"

Crimson. The correspondence of colours and sounds has exercised many minds, from the blind man, who long ago said that red was like the sound of a trumpet, to the modern French writer who maintained that "the vowel *u* corresponds to the colour yellow, and therefore to the sound of flutes." The quiet richness of crimson is to the exciting splendour of scarlet, as the mellow note of a horn to the blare of trumpets. Stevenson's good taste forbids the excess of logic which might have likened his gamboge to a piccolo.

XXV.—BOOK-BUYING

Primrose Hill. Jephthah's daughter "bewailed her virginity upon the mountains."—Judges xi. 38.

SHORT BIOGRAPHIES

FRANCIS BACON (1561–1626) began life with every advantage. His father was Queen Elizabeth's Lord Keeper; his mother was a religious and highly educated woman, whose sister married the great Lord Burghley. At the age of twelve Francis entered Trinity College, Cambridge, where Queen Elizabeth "delighted much to confer with him, and to prove him with questions; unto which he delivered himself with that gravity and maturity above his years, that Her Majesty would often term him 'the Young Lord Keeper.'" His sixteenth and seventeenth years were spent in the suite of the British Ambassador to France, but in the following year his father's death left him, as the youngest son, unprovided for, and he entered Gray's Inn to study for the legal profession. At the age of twenty-three he was a member of Parliament, where he soon gained the ear of the House; but ten years later, having incurred the Queen's displeasure by his speeches on money grants, he was disappointed in his hopes of the Attorney-Generalship. His generous patron, Lord Essex, gave him land which he sold for a sum equal to £12,000 of our money; but his debts continued to increase, and the rich widow whom he proceeded to court went the same way as the Attorney-Generalship, to Sir Edward Coke, the great lawyer. In 1601 Bacon made a bid for the Queen's favour by pressing home the charge

of treason against his benefactor, Lord Essex, and secured his condemnation. However, it was under James that his fortunes began to improve. To that learned monarch he dedicated his first work in philosophy, which James profanely likened to the peace of God, in that it "passeth all understanding." In 1606 Bacon married the daughter of a London merchant; he became Solicitor-General in 1607, Privy Councillor in 1616, Lord Chancellor and Baron Verulam in 1618, and in 1621 Viscount St. Albans. Then came his fall. He pleaded guilty to a series of charges of corruption in the administration of justice. The fine and term of imprisonment imposed were remitted by the King, but Bacon was pronounced incapable of holding any office in the state. The rest of his life was spent in study, and a year before his death the third edition of the *Essays* appeared, in which the original number of ten (in 1597) was increased to fifty-nine. His great contribution to the advancement of knowledge was his unvarying insistence on experiment rather than argumentation for the discovery of truth. What he taught he practised to the end. Taking a drive on a snowy day, and wishing to test the preservative effect of cold, he procured a chicken and stuffed it with snow, himself assisting in the operation. The result was a severe chill, from which he never recovered.

ABRAHAM COWLEY (1618–67) was the son of a London stationer. At Westminster School he laid

the foundation of his learning, and published a volume of English verse which was twice reprinted before he went to Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1637. There he wrote more verse, English and Latin, and became a Fellow of his College. In 1643 he refused to sign the Solemn League and Covenant, and proceeded to Oxford, the Royalist head-quarters. He was active on the King's side, and three years later went to France, where he was employed in confidential correspondence in Queen Henrietta Maria's service. He worked hard and was occasionally sent on special missions, to Holland and elsewhere. During these years his love-poems, *The Mistress*, were printed in London and became immensely popular; they are now the least readable of his works, for they are obviously mere exercises, unrelieved by any real feeling. He never married. Returning to England in 1656, to observe the state of affairs in the Royalist interest, he was fortunate in escaping persecution through the intervention of friends on the Parliamentary side. He published more poems, and being tired of politics waited for the Restoration. But like many other faithful Royalists Cowley was neglected by Charles II. He ardently advocated Bacon's methods in science, "whom a wise King and Nature chose Lord Chancellor of both their laws," and was one of the founders of the Royal Society. At last two powerful friends secured for him an income on which he was able to live in the country, first near Barnes, and then at Chertsey. He died from a severe chill caught by

staying too long among his labourers on a hot summer's day. His poetry is now little read, though much of it is admirable. Wordsworth advised a friend to "read all Cowley; he is very valuable to a collector of English sound sense." He was "a poet very dear" to Charles Lamb: "I prefer the graceful rambling of his essays, even to the courtly elegance and ease of Addison; abstracting from this the latter's exquisite humour."

RICHARD STEELE (1672–1729) was the son of a Dublin attorney. At the age of thirteen he went to school at the Charterhouse, where he and Addison became warm friends; and the friendship was renewed at Oxford, when Steele went to Christ Church in 1689. An enthusiastic supporter of King William and the Whig party, he left Oxford and enlisted in the Coldstream Guards. He was soon given a commission, and while ensign wrote *The Christian Hero*; "with a design," as he afterwards said, "principally to fix on my mind a strong impression of virtue and religion, in opposition to a stronger propensity to unwarrantable pleasures." His earliest work, a poem on the death of Queen Mary, had contained the significant line, "Pleasure itself has something that's severe." Even his comedies, of which he wrote four, show the genuine sense of religion and duty which was an integral part of his lively and pleasure-loving nature. In 1707 he was appointed Gazetteer, and gentleman-usher to the Prince Consort. In the same

year he married for the second time, his first wife having died a few months after marriage. In 1709 he planned and founded *The Tatler*, succeeded after two years by *The Spectator*. *The Guardian* followed in 1713, and several other papers were in succession founded and mainly written by this enterprising and original Irishman. Politics were becoming his chief interest, and he was elected to Parliament in 1714; but a Tory House of Commons objected to some of his productions, and ejected him by 245 votes against 152. When the Whigs returned to power he was given several offices, made Governor of the Royal Company at Drury Lane Theatre, and knighted. *The Fishpool*, published in 1718, explained his patent device for bringing salmon and other fish alive from Ireland to the London market. His last comedy, *The Conscious Lovers*, was produced with very great success in 1722. But his health failed, and he settled near Carmarthen in 1726. A friend has recorded that "he retained his cheerful sweetness of temper to the last, and would often be carried out of a summer's evening where the country lads and lasses were assembled at their rural sports, and with his pencil give an order on his agent, the mercer, for a new gown to the best dancer."

JOSEPH ADDISON (1672–1719) was the son and grandson of clergymen. When his father was Dean of Lichfield, Joseph was sent as a private pupil to the Charterhouse. He went to Queen's College,

Oxford, at the age of fifteen, and two years later was elected Demy of Magdalen. He wrote verses, English and Latin, gained an exact and profound knowledge of the Latin poets, and was destined to follow his father's profession. But his learning and talents were becoming known during his ten years' sojourn at Magdalen. The press was beginning to exercise great influence on public opinion, and the Whig leaders were anxious to enlist young men of literary genius in the public service. So Addison was given a pension of £300 a year, to prepare himself for public life by residence and study abroad, and accordingly spent the years 1699 and 1700 at Paris and Blois. Thence he passed to Italy, spent some time in Germany and Holland, and returned to England in 1703. But his Whig friends were now out of office. So he turned to literature, wrote *The Campaign*, a poem on Blenheim, a narrative of his travels in Italy, and the opera of *Rosamond*. In 1706 he became Under-Secretary of State, failed completely as a speaker in the House of Commons, and was made Chief Secretary for Ireland. During his stay in that country Steele had founded *The Tatler*. To the first eighty numbers Addison contributed only seven or eight, but on his return to London he took full advantage of a medium peculiarly suited to the display of his literary powers. In *The Spectator* he is at his very best, and he also wrote in *The Guardian*. His tragedy of *Cato* was acted in 1713, but its success was mainly due to its popular interpretation as a sort of patriotic manifesto. Three

years later Addison married the Countess of Warwick, and next year was appointed Secretary of State, an office which he resigned owing to ill-health after eleven months' tenure. On his death-bed he summoned his stepson, Lord Warwick. "I have sent for you," he said, "that you may see how a Christian can die." He was buried in Westminster Abbey. In an age of strong political contention Addison was respected and liked by both parties. His moderation was conciliatory; his very timidity was an amulet against the evil eye of jealousy. Pope quarrelled with him, and revenged himself for fancied affronts by the immortal lines descriptive of his supposed character. But Pope was not humane; and Addison's humanity, says Macaulay, "is without parallel in literary history."

SAMUEL JOHNSON (1709–84) was the son of a bookseller at Lichfield, where Samuel went to school at the age of seven. In 1728 he was sent to Pembroke College, Oxford, but left after a few years without a degree. Already he was afflicted by the serious disease which hampered his energies all through life. In 1731 his father died, and with £20 for his patrimony Johnson took a post as usher in Market Bosworth School, but left after a few months. Two years later he got five guineas for translating a book of travels in Abyssinia. At the age of twenty-seven he married a widow of forty-eight, with children and £800. He loved her dearly, and her memory was precious to

him his life long. A school started near Lichfield, probably with Mrs. Johnson's money, brought him only two or three pupils, one of whom was David Garrick; and in the following year master and pupil went to London together. Next year his wife joined him, and he began to write for the *Gentleman's Magazine* reports of the Parliamentary debates, an unlawful proceeding in those days; but the reports were disguised as *Debates of the Senate af Lilliput*, and Johnson composed them with great freedom, from accounts supplied to him, taking care "not to let the Whig dogs have the best of it." In the same year his first poem, *London*, brought him £10 and some recognition; but his lack of a degree disqualified him for the head-mastership of Appleby Grammar School. For nine years he struggled on, doing what literary work he could get to do. In 1747 his friend Garrick opened Drury Lane Theatre, and Johnson wrote for him his famous *Prologue* in verse. Two years later Garrick produced Johnson's tragedy of *Irene*, which ran for nine nights with difficulty, but it brought him nearly £300. Still, in the same year his second poem, *The Vanity of Human Wishes*, realised no more than £15. *The Rambler* lasted from 1750 to 1752, till just before his wife's death. He was now working at the great *Dictionary*, which appeared in 1755, and brought him universal recognition, and degrees from Oxford and Dublin; but the money he received for it was largely spent in the expense of its production, and he was still in great poverty. In 1759 his mother died, whom he had been

supporting all this time, and to pay for whose funeral he wrote the moral tale of *Rasselas*. Next year came a government pension of £300, and Johnson was no more in abject want, but his charities involved such personal sacrifices as very few men could endure. He was now famous among men of renown, and he delighted in the social intercourse which best called forth his powers of mind. His friendship with Boswell began in 1763, and with Mrs. Thrale in the following year. Burke, Goldsmith, Garrick, Sir Joshua Reynolds, were among his intimate friends. His edition of Shakespeare appeared in 1765, and his *Lives of the Poets* in 1779–81. In 1773 he visited Scotland and the Hebrides with Boswell, whose Journal of the tour is one of the delights of literature, and Johnson also produced *A Visit to the Hebrides*. His last two years were much afflicted by illness, but he died with the same fortitude with which he had lived, respected by all who could appreciate his manly character, and loved by his friends.

Oliver Goldsmith (1728–74), the son of an Irish clergyman, was educated at village schools and at Trinity College, Dublin, where he took his degree in 1749. After false starts at various professions he inclined to medicine, which he studied from 1752 to 1754 at Edinburgh, and then proceeded to Leyden for the same purpose. But his rambling, unpractical character soon sent him travelling on foot about the Continent, with a flute for his companion and support.

"In Italy," says Scott, "where his music or skill was held in less esteem, he found hospitality by disputing at the monasteries, in the character of a travelling scholar, upon certain philosophical theses, which the learned inhabitants were obliged, by their foundation, to uphold against all impugners." Macaulay, more sceptical, tells only of "alms which he obtained at the gates of convents." By 1756 he was in London, now an apothecary's drudge, now a wretched usher at a Peckham "academy," now writing criticisms for the reviews, always on the edge of utter destitution. *An Enquiry into the Present State of Polite Learning in Europe* attracted a little attention, and in 1760 he contributed to the *Public Ledger* the series of articles published two years later as *The Citizen of the World.* In the following year Johnson saved him from immediate distress by selling the manuscript of *The Vicar of Wakefield* for £60, but it was not published till Goldsmith's fame had been established by the production of his poem *The Traveller* in 1764. Two years later the famous novel appeared, and went through three editions in six months. At intervals of two years were produced the comedy, *The Goodnatured Man*, the poem, *The Deserted Village*, the comedy, *She Stoops to Conquer,* all masterpieces, and in two years more Goldsmith was dead. He wrote also histories of Greece, Rome and England, and a Natural History, as well as a good deal of minor work, and some excellent humorous poems. He never married. After the publication of *The Traveller* Goldsmith was admitted to the

famous Literary Club, to which Johnson and his distinguished friends belonged. His sensitive genius and utter want of reserve made him in some sense the butt of that intelligent body. Garrick's statement is famous, that he "wrote like an angel, but talked like poor Poll." Boswell's systematic depreciation must be discounted by remembering his natural dislike for a rival in Johnson's good graces, and even his record tells how Goldsmith could sometimes score a point against that conversational gladiator. Printed after his death, the verses called *Retaliation* showed Goldsmith writing with the pleasant malice of a good-tempered angel, and keenly alive to the weaker points of his associates. To the truth and originality of the sentiment which animates *The Vicar of Wakefield* many men of high distinction have paid generous tribute; and the stately Latin of Johnson's inscription for his monument in Westminster Abbey proclaims that he handled almost every kind of literary composition and adorned them all: *qui nullum fere scribendi genus non tetigit, nullum quod tetigit non ornavit.*

CHARLES LAMB (1775–1834) was born in the Temple, where his father was clerk and servant to one of the Benchers. Two other children lived to maturity, John and Mary, twelve and ten years older than Charles. The family was poor, and Charles had his elementary education at an "academy" in Fetter Lane. In his eighth year a nomination to

Christ's Hospital gave him seven years of better teaching; he gained a good knowledge of Latin, and he gained even more by seven years' companionship with Coleridge, and the life-long friendship which followed. "He was an amiable, gentle boy, very sensible and keenly observing, indulged by his school-fellows and by his masters on account of his infirmity of speech [he stammered badly]. I never heard his name mentioned without the addition of Charles." So in later years wrote C. V. Le Grice, and the affectionate practice survives to-day. Holiday times were sometimes spent at Blakesware, in Hertfordshire, where Mrs. Lamb's mother was housekeeper to a family who were often away. She is the Grandmother Field of *Dream-Children*. Soon after leaving school Lamb got a post in the South Sea House, where John, the prosperous member of the family, had an appointment; thence he was appointed to a clerkship in the East India Company's office, where he served till his retirement in 1825. Coleridge's occasional visits to London gave the friends some long and happy evenings together, and Lamb contributed poems to two volumes brought out by Coleridge. The disappointment of his love for the lady whom he calls Alice W——n, assisting an hereditary tendency to insanity, caused his confinement for some months in 1796, and the same year brought the terrible event which coloured all his life. The same disorder seized his sister Mary; she killed her mother and wounded her now almost imbecile father, and was sent to an asylum. When she recovered, Charles took her to

live with him, and their loving companionship lasted till his death; but Mary's calamity returned to her with increasing frequency, though in a milder form; then Charles would lead her by the hand to the asylum, and live alone till she was fit to come home. His own disorder never returned. The little tale of *Rosamund Gray*, composed in 1798, contains portraits of himself and Mary, and of Alice W——n: "A lovely thing," wrote Shelley; "how much knowledge of the sweetest and deepest part of our nature is in it!" *John Woodvil*, a blank-verse drama in the Elizabethan style, having failed to please the theatre managers, was published in 1802. The poor farce, *Mr. H——*, was produced at Drury Lane in 1806, and Lamb has recorded its dismal failure; but in the next year the famous *Tales from Shakespeare*, the joint work of brother and sister, made a well-deserved success. *The Adventures of Ulysses*, by Charles alone, treated the story of the *Odyssey* as the picture of "a brave man struggling with adversity." And now came a work of high importance in its influence on English literature. *Specimens of English Dramatic Poets Contemporary with Shakespeare* (1808), with its commentary, opened men's eyes to the riches of our earlier poetry, and added a large nail to the coffin of eighteenth-century poetic ideals. In 1820 the *London Magazine* was founded by John Scott, and the *Essays of Elia* began to appear in it. We need not attempt to describe those masterpieces. The first series was republished in 1823, and a second in 1833. In 1825, "after thirty-three years of slavery," Lamb

retired from the East India Office with a substantial pension. The death of Coleridge in 1834 was a grievous blow, and five weeks later Lamb himself died from the apparently trifling effects of a fall in the street. "Oh, he was good, if e'er a good man lived!" So wrote his friend Wordsworth, who knew him in his weakness and in his strength. Mary survived her brother for nearly thirteen years.

WILLIAM HAZLITT (1778–1830) was born at Maidstone, where his father was a Unitarian minister. A precocious child, he was educated first at home, and at the age of fifteen went to the Unitarian college at Hackney. In 1798 he met Coleridge, who preached his last (Unitarian) sermon near Hazlitt's home, and was profoundly impressed. Still living at home, he acquired most of the knowledge he was afterwards to use, and delighted in solitary thought. It is said that after the age of thirty he never read a book through; but he was always a deep thinker. He decided to be a painter, and spent four months in Paris, copying pictures at the Louvre. Acquaintance with Coleridge, Wordsworth and the Lambs followed; his portrait of Charles Lamb as a Venetian senator is in the National Portrait Gallery. However, becoming convinced that he would never excel in painting, he took to literature, and produced *The Principles of Human Action* in 1806 and an English grammar in 1810. He married in 1808, and after four years spent

at Winterslow, on a small property of his wife's, he moved to London. After a course of lectures on "The Rise and Progress of Modern Philosophy" Hazlitt turned to journalism, and became a parliamentary reporter for the *Morning Chronicle.* Some papers contributed to Hunt's journal, *The Examiner,* first showed Hazlitt's true vein. *Characters of Shakespeare's Plays* appeared in 1817, dedicated to Lamb. He lectured on the English Poets, the Age of Elizabeth, and the Comic Writers, and published his lectures. He was also one of the contributors to the *London Magazine.* Finding his wife's society intolerable, he parted from her in 1822, and later married again; but his second wife left him. He travelled abroad and wrote his impressions to the *Morning Chronicle.* In 1825 appeared *The Spirit of the Age,* judgments on living writers, and in 1827 he began a life of his great hero, Napoleon; but his health failed, and he died three years later at his lodgings in Soho. His last words were, "Well, I've had a happy life." This is the view of a clear and sane intelligence, which could distinguish the temporary vexations of the spirit from its abiding joys. It must have been a strong character which, capable of such powerful emotions as Hazlitt was capable of, could thus estimate their total effect. He has been described as "a dissenter to the backbone." His politics were such as to ensure his being always in a minority of one. "I have quarrelled with almost all my old friends," is his own statement; but some of them remained faithful to the end.

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ally being Professor Wilson, the famous "Christopher North" of *Blackwood's Magazine*. He was now deep in German metaphysics, and opium. In 1821 he contributed to the *London Magazine* the first portion of his famous *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater*, and wrote many other articles on all sorts of topics. After five years he moved to Edinburgh to be in touch with Wilson's magazine, and his family followed in 1830. Several of his children died, and he lost his much-loved wife in 1837. De Quincey was liked and admired by those to whom he uncovered his more amiable qualities. He shone especially in his family life. When roused, he was a first-rate talker, and avoided Coleridge's practice of monopolising the conversation. When he had money he was extraordinarily generous, as Coleridge and others knew; but it is perhaps symptomatic that his Christian name is less generally familiar than that of any other equally distinguished writer. It is also worth noticing that neither he nor Hazlitt seems to have left any verse.

JAMES HENRY LEIGH HUNT (1784–1859) was born at Southgate, Middlesex, the son and grandson of West Indian clergymen. He went to Christ's Hospital in 1792, and left, like Lamb, at the age of fifteen. He wrote verses which his father published in 1802 as *Juvenilia*. He was a great reader and playgoer, and wrote the theatrical notices for a paper started by his brother John in 1805. Three years later the

brothers started a weekly paper of Liberal sympathies called *The Examiner*. In 1810 they produced *The Reflector*, a quarterly magazine of literature and politics, and eventually the Hunts hit so hard at the Prince Regent that they were indicted for libel, and sentenced to imprisonment for two years and a fine of £500 each. There was little rigour in the captivity. Hunt's wife and children shared his very tolerable quarters, and visits from friends were frequent. "The Lambs came to comfort me in all weathers." Moore brought Byron to see the patriotic criminal. Shelley, his "friend of friends," stood nobly by him. In 1816 he produced the *Story of Rimini*, a fine poem on the famous episode of Paolo and Francesca, mostly written in prison. Keats and Shelley were now among Hunt's intimate friends, and an article in *The Examiner* (1816) first made their genius known to the general public. His own essays, now appearing in *The Indicator*, were adding to his reputation; but family cares were pressing, and funds were low. Then came an attractive proposal from Italy, where Shelley and Byron were living. Hunt was to bring out his family, and join the two poets in producing a Liberal journal. Always an optimist, he consented, and the family, including seven children, set sail in the middle of November; but owing to various mishaps they did not reach Leghorn till the end of June. A few days later Shelley was drowned, and this was fatal to Hunt's prospects in Italy; for Byron was always an incalculable person, and he soon tired of *The Liberal*. Then he left for Greece,

and after some stay in Florence the Hunts returned to England overland in 1825. The rest of Hunt's life is a record of journalistic enterprise and continuous pen-work. "I had never lost cheerfulness of tone," he writes, "for I had never ceased to be cheerful in my opinions." His fine play, the *Legend of Florence*, was acted with success at Covent Garden in 1840, and was twice revived. In 1848 the ex-criminal was awarded a government pension of £200. While living at Chelsea he made a new friend in Thomas Carlyle, when that prophet descended upon London from the wilds of Craigenputtock. Of Hunt he wrote: "A gifted, gentle, and valiant human soul, as it buffets its way through the billows of time and will not drown, though often in danger, *cannot* be drowned, but conquers and leaves a track of radiance behind it."

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON (1850–94) was the only child of a Scotch engineer, expert in lighthouse building, and perfecter of the revolving light. He was a delicate boy, and his education, despite various tutors and day-schools, appears to have been mainly conducted by himself. Shakespeare, Scott and Dumas were early friends. At his last school, Edinburgh Academy, and in his home circle, he was always starting magazines. Three years and a half were devoted to the engineering profession, but without much interest. A free life was what he longed for, and he delighted in the companionship of seamen,

chimney-sweeps, and thieves. "My circle," he afterwards wrote, "was being continually changed by the action of the police magistrate." At the age of twenty-one engineering was abandoned, and the law became his vocation; but all this time his mind was set on the great problem of "learning to write." He was continually writing works in imitation of his favourite authors. Then followed visits to the Continent for health or pleasure, visits to London and the making of many friends, tramps in Scotland and canoe voyages in Belgium and France. Numerous magazine articles preceded the appearance of his first book, *An Inland Voyage*, in 1878. In the following year he went to California and there married Mrs. Osbourne, a lady whom he had met in France, "a character as strong, interesting and romantic almost as his own; an inseparable sharer of all his thoughts, and staunch companion of all his adventures." The next two winters were spent at Davos for the sake of Stevenson's health, and he wrote a great deal that was published later. *Treasure Island* appeared in 1883. "Its reception reads like a fairy tale. Statesmen and judges and all sorts of staid and sober men became boys once more, sitting up long after bedtime to read their new book." Not even the Riviera, where he was now living, ensured health; however, he recovered sufficiently to return to England, and lived at Bournemouth from 1884 to 1887. A year after his return the delightful *Child's Garden of Verse* appeared; *Kidnapped* and *Jekyll and Hyde* followed in the next year. In 1887 Stevenson's father

died, and his mother accompanied her son and daughter-in-law to America. After a winter in the Adirondack Mountains, where there was a sanatorium for consumptives, the party spent three years in cruising about the Pacific, and finally settled down at Samoa in 1891. *The Master of Ballantrae* was finished in 1889. *Catriona* was written at Samoa; *The Wrecker* and *The Ebb Tide*, already begun in collaboration with his stepson, Lloyd Osbourne, were finished; and *Weir of Hermiston* was half written. The consumption had been definitely arrested during his stay in Samoa, but his enfeebled frame never regained strength, and he died almost suddenly.

EDMUND GOSSE (1849–1928) was educated privately. His chief publications in poetry are: *On Viol and Flute* (1873), *King Erik* (1876), *New Poems* (1879), *Firdausi in Exile* (1885), *In Russet and Silver* (1894), *Hypolympia* (1901); and in prose: *Northern Studies* (1879), *Life of Gray* (1882), *Seventeenth-Century Studies* (1883), *Life of Congreve* (1888), *History of Eighteenth-Century Literature* (1889), *Life of P. H. Gosse* (1890), *Gossip in a Library* (1891), *The Secret of Narcisse* (1892), *Questions at Issue* (1893), *The Jacobean Poets* (1894), *Critical Kitcats* (1896), *History of Modern English Literature* (1897), *Life and Letters of Dr. Donne* (1899), *Life of Jeremy Taylor* (1904), *Father and Son* (1907), *Henrik Ibsen* (1908).

AUGUSTINE BIRRELL (1850–1933) was educated at Amersham Hall School, and Trinity Hall, Cambridge. His chief publications are: *Obiter Dicta* (1884, 1887), *Life of Charlotte Brontë* (1885), *Res Judicatæ* (1892), *Men, Women and Books* (1894), *Collected Essays* (1900), *Miscellanies* (1901), *William Hazlitt* (1902). His complete works, edited by himself, under the title *The Collected Essays and Addresses of Augustine Birrell*, are published by Messrs. J. M. Dent and Sons Limited.

WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS (1865) was educated at the Godolphin School, Hammersmith, and the Erasmus Smith School, Dublin. His chief publications are: *The Wanderings of Oisin* (1889), *The Countess Kathleen* (1892), *The Celtic Twilight* (1893), *The Poems of William Blake* (1893), *Poems* (1895) and other volumes of verse, *Ideas of Good and Evil* (1903), *Where there is Nothing* (1903), *Deidre* (1907), *J. M. Synge and the Ireland of his Time* (1911), *Responsibilities* (1914).

EDWARD VERRALL LUCAS (1868) was educated privately, and at University College, London. His chief publications are: *The Open Road* (1899), *Highways and Byways in Sussex* (1904), *A Wanderer in Holland* (1905), *A Wanderer in London* (1906), *Life, Works and Letters of Charles and Mary Lamb* (editor), and many volumes of essays.

GILBERT KEITH CHESTERTON (1874–1937) was educated at St. Paul's School, London. His chief publications are: *Greybeards at Play* (1900), *The Wild Knight* (1900), *The Defendant* (1901), *Twelve Types* (1902), *Browning* (1903), *G. F. Watts* (1904), *The Napoleon of Notting Hill* (1904), *Heretics* (1905), *Dickens* (1906), *Orthodoxy* (1908), *What's Wrong with the World* (1910), *The Innocence of Father Brown* (1911), and the play *Magic* (1913).

EXERCISES

I

1. Point to different passages, showing what sort of readers Bacon wrote for.

2. Why is the traveller to change his lodging from one end of the town to another?

3. Having read and considered this essay, and page 211, write an essay on Travelling.

II

4. Show clearly, with examples from ordinary life and from history, the difference between wisdom and cunning.

5. With ll. 5, 6 contrast Polonius' advice to Laertes, *Hamlet*, I. iii. 78.

6. What illustration would a modern writer be likely to use instead of that of the fox and badger?

7. Think of some cases in which the interest of the individual or the class may conflict with that of the community.

III

8. Show, with references, from what point of view Bacon considers the subject.

9. Write a note on the ancient and modern senses of the word "humour."

XII

30. Collect some more examples of Sir Roger's "simplicity."

31. Describe some cathedral or interesting church which you have examined.

XIII

32. Write notes on: Poetic diction, low terms, Johnson's style.

33. Define the following words as used in this essay: Vehicle, uncouth, intrinsically, arbitrarily, delicate, prepossessed, counteraction, invested, involution, risibility, academic.

34. "Poverty is certainly and invariably despised.' Consider the truth of this.

35. Give examples of some of Johnson's general statements.

36. What is the point of the examples quoted from Homer and Lucan?

37. In the last paragraph Johnson applies to *life* the statement which he has been making about literature. Put this application clearly in your own words.

38. What facts about Johnson's person and manners add point to the last paragraph?

39. Give examples of persons who have succeeded in being "caressed on their own terms" (*a*) as writers, (*b*) in society.

XIV

40. Write a detailed contrast between Beau Tibbs and Will Wimble.

VII

22. Imagine and describe a club for discussion, made up from your own friends.

23. Give your own opinions about the persons here described.

VIII

24. What point is common to all the objections raised by the members of the club?

IX

25. Write a note on the proper treatment of pets when they grow old.

26. What do you think of Sir Roger's arrangement about sermons?

X

27. Compare the qualities needed in business with those needed in a profession. Do the conditions of modern life affect the truth of Addison's view?

XI

28. Write an essay on the less religious advantages of Sunday observance, in town and in country.

29. Define the following words: Degenerate, itinerant, foil, concurrence, tithe, insinuate, deference.

love my dog; that home is home though it is never so homely; that we must not look a gift horse in the mouth; of two disputants the warmest is generally in the wrong; that the poor copy the vices of the rich; that ill-gotten gain never prospers. Try your hand on some of these.

XXI

50. Write an essay on this subject, choosing your own persons, and giving your reasons in detail.

XXII

51. Contrast De Quincey's way of looking at Shakespeare with Johnson's in XIII.

XXIV

52. Describe some hobby of your own.

XXV

53. Write an essay on collecting something—not books.

XXVI

54. Consider the notions which the old are apt to have about the young, and the young about the old, and try to find what amount of justice may be in those notions.

55. Write your own notion of the Whole Duty of Woman.

56. Consider the Whole Duty of Man.

XVI

41. What is the point of the references to Bedlam at the beginning and end of the essay?

42. Why are law cases decided by previous judgments, not simply by "the same good sense which determined lawyers in former ages"?

43. Why are lawyers so frequently the subject of satire? Do the other professions escape it?

XVII

44. Write an essay showing in detail how far this is applicable to modern school life, and how far not.

45. How would you conduct yourself if you were a teacher?

46. How do the French and Spanish differ in character?

47. Explain: Invidious, attenuated, rare, unfledged, unct[illegible] excommunicated, sagacity, initiation, orifice div[illegible] [illegible]nagate, innocuous, pedant, broach, tr[illegible] bul[illegible], compeer, cordial.